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1822





N^o. XXVII.

OXBERRY'S

NEW

English Drama.

— THE
BUSY BODY,

A COMEDY ;

BY

Mrs. Centlivre.

BOSTON :

PUBLISHED BY WELLS AND LILLY—COURT-STREET :

AND

A. T. GOODRICH & CO. NEW-YORK.

1822.

Plays

CONTAINED IN THIS EDITION, AS FAR AS YET PUBLISHED IN ENGLAND.

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☞ Those marked thus * are Farces or Melo-drames; the prices of which are 20 cents; the Plays and Operas 25 cents.

Oxberry's Edition.

THE BUSY BODY,

A COMEDY ;

By Mrs. Centlivre.

WITH PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE ONLY EDITION EXISTING, WHICH IS FAITHFULLY
MARKED WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS,
AND STAGE DIRECTIONS,

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatres Royal.

By W. OXBERRY, *Comedian.*

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Remarks.

THE BUSY BODY.

THE *Busy Body* is a comedy that has now held possession of the stage above a hundred years, (the best test of excellence :) and the merit that has enabled it to do so consists in the ingenuity of the contrivance, the liveliness of the plot, and the striking effect of the situations. Mrs. Centlivre, in this and her other plays, could do nothing without a stratagem ; but she could do every thing with one. She delights in putting her *dramatis personæ* continually at their wit's end, and in helping them off with a new evasion ; and the subtlety of her resources is in proportion to the criticalness of the situation and the shortness of the notice for resorting to an expedient. Twenty times in seeing or reading one of her plays your pulse beats quick, and you become restless and apprehensive for the event ; but with a fine theatrical sleight of hand, she lets you off, undoes the knot of the difficulty, and you breathe freely again, and have a hearty laugh into the bargain. In short, with her knowledge of chambermaids' tricks, and insight into the intricate foldings of lovers' hearts, she plays with the events of comedy, as a juggler shuffles about a pack of cards, to serve his own purposes, and to

the surprise of the spectator. This is one of the most delightful employments of the dramatic art. It costs nothing—but a voluntary tax on the inventive powers of the author; and it produces when successfully done, profit and praise to one party, and pleasure to all. To shew the extent and importance of theatrical amusements (which some grave persons would decry altogether, and which no one can extol too highly,) a friend of ours, whose name will be as well known to posterity as it is to his contemporaries, was not long ago mentioning that one of the earliest and most memorable impressions ever made on his mind was the seeing *Venice Preserved* acted in a country town when he was only nine years old. But he added that an elderly lady who took him to see it, lamented notwithstanding the wonder and delight he experienced, that instead of *Venice Preserved* they had not gone to see the *Busy Body*, which had been acted the night before. This was fifty years ago, since which, and for fifty years before that, it has been acted a thousand times in town and country, giving delight to the old, the young, and middle-aged, passing the time carelessly, and affording matter for agreeable reflection afterwards, making us think ourselves and wish to be thought, the men equal to Sir George Airy in grace and spirit, the women to Miranda and Isabinda in love and beauty, and all of us superior to Marplot in wit. Among the scenes that might be mentioned in this Comedy as striking instances of happy stage effect, are Miranda's contrivance to escape from Sir George by making him turn his back upon her to hear her confession of love, and the ludicrous attitude in which he is left waiting for the rest of her speech after the lady has vanished; his offer of the hundred pounds to her guardian to make love to her in his presence, and when she receives him in dumb shew, his

answering for both; his situation concealed behind the chimney screen, his supposed metamorphosis into a monkey, and his deliverance from thence, in that character, by the interference of Marplot; Mrs. Patch's sudden conversion of the mysterious love letter into a charm for the tooth-ache, and the whole of Marplot's meddling and blunders. The last character is taken from Dryden and the Duchess of Newcastle; and is indeed the only attempt at character in the play. It is amusing and superficial. We see little of the puzzled perplexity of his brain, but his actions are absurd enough. He whiffles about the stage with considerable volubility, and makes a very lively automaton. Sir George Airy sets out for a scene or two in a spirited manner, but afterwards the character evaporates in the name; and he becomes as common place as his friend Charles, who merely laments over his misfortunes or gets out of them by following the suggestions of his valet or his valet's mistress. Miranda is the heroine of the piece, and has a right to be so; for she is a beauty and an heiress. Her friend has less to recommend her; but who can refuse to fall in love with her name? What volumes of sighs, what a world of love, is breathed in the very sound alone—the letters that form the charming name of Isabinda!

W. H.

Time of Representation.

The time this piece takes in representation is one hour and forty-seven minutes. The first act occupies the space of sixteen minutes—The second, twenty-four—the third, twenty—the fourth, twenty-four—and the fifth, twenty-three. The half-price commences, generally, at half-past eight o'clock.

Stage Directions.

By R.H.	-----	is meant	-----	Right Hand.
L.H.	-----			Left Hand.
S.E.	-----			Second Entrance.
U.E.	-----			Upper Entrance.
M.D.	-----			Middle Door.
D.F.	-----			Door in Flat.
R.H.D.	-----			Right Hand Door.
L.H.D.	-----			Left Hand Door.

Prologue.

THOUGH modern prophets were expos'd of late,
The author could not prophecy her fate ;
If with such scenes an audience had been fir'd,
The poet must have really been inspir'd.
But these, alas ! are melancholy days
For modern prophets and for modern plays :
Yet since prophetic lies please fools o'fashion,
And women are so fond of agitation,
To men of sense I'll prophecy anew ;
And tell you wondrous things that will prove true.
Undaunted col'nels will to camps repair,
Assur'd there'll be no skirmishes this year ;
On our own terms will flow the wish'd-for peace,
All wars, except 'twixt man and wife, will cease ;
The Grand Monarque may wish his son a throne,
But hardly will advance to lose his own.
This season most things bear a smiling face,
But play'rs in summer have a dismal case,
Since your appearance only is our act of grace.
Court ladies will to country seats be gone,
My lord can't all the year live great in town ;
Where, wanting op'ras, basset, and a play,
They'll sigh and stitch a gown to pass the time away :
Gay city wives at Tunbridge will appear,
Whose husbands long have labour'd for an heir,

Where many a courtier may their wants relieve,
But by the waters only they conceive :
The Fleet-street sempstress—toast of Temple sparks,
That runs spruce neckcloths for attorney's clerks.
At Cupid's gardens will her hours regale,
Sing "fair Dorinda," and drink bottled ale !
At all assemblies rakes are up and down,
And gamesters where they think they are not known,
Should I denounce our author's fate to-day,
To cry down prophecies you'd damn the play :
Yet whims like these have sometimes made you laugh ;
'Tis tattling all, like Isaac Bickerstaff.

Since war and places claim the bards that write,
Be kind, and bear a woman's treat to-night ;
Let your indulgence all her fears allay,
And none but women-haters damn this play.

Costume.

SIR GEORGE AIRY.

Superfine brown cloth dress coat trimmed with silver frogs, white waistcoat and breeches, arm hat, and blue great coat.

SIR FRANCIS GRIPE.

Spotted velvet coat and breeches, buff silk waistcoat, cock'd hat, gold loop, and gold beaded cane.

CHARLES.

Blue dress coat, white waistcoat, black breeches. Second Dress, Brown Spanish jacket, breeches and cloak of green silk, boots, gauntlets, hat, feathers, &c. Green silk stockings.

SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK.

An old gentleman's suit of crimson, cock'd hat, &c.

MARPLOT.

Green dress coat, gold buttons and frogs, white waistcoat and breeches, arm hat.

WHISPER.

Blue livery frock, one Epaulette, buff waistcoat and breeches, Hat and band.

WAITER.

Modern dress.

4 SERVANTS.

Gay liveries.

MIRANDA.

White satin spencer, muslin skirt, leno veil. Second Dress—Crimson velvet body, white petticoat trimmed with velvet.

ISABINDA.

White muslin dress trimmed with white satin ribbon.

PATCH.

Smart coloured gown, white apron trimmed with ribbon.

SCENTWELL.

Coloured gown.

Persons Represented.

As originally acted, 1709.

<i>Sir George Airy</i>	- - - -	Mr. Wilkes.
<i>Sir Francis Gripe</i>	- - - -	Mr. Festeourt.
<i>Charles</i>	- - - -	Mr. Mills.
<i>Sir Jealous Traffick</i>	- - - -	Mr. Bullock.
<i>Marplot</i>	- - - -	Mr. Pack.
<i>Whisper</i>	- - - -	Mr. Bullock, jun.

<i>Miranda</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Cross.
<i>Isabinda</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Rogers.
<i>Patch</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Saunders.
<i>Scentwell</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Mills.

1818.

Drury-lane.

<i>Sir George Airy</i>	Mr. Penley.
<i>Sir Francis Gripe</i>	Mr. Dowton.
<i>Charles</i>	Mr. Barnard.
<i>Sir Jealous Traffick</i>	Mr. Gattie.
<i>Marplot</i>	Mr. Harley.
<i>Whisper</i>	Mr. Kent.

Miranda	Mrs. Davison.
Isabinda	Mrs. Orger.
Patch	Mrs. Harlow.
Scentwell	Miss Tidswell.

THE BUSY BODY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Park.*

Enter SIR GEORGE AIRY, R.H. *meeting* CHARLES, L.H.

Charles. Ha ! sir George Airy a birding thus early ! What forbidden game rous'd you so soon ? for no lawful occasion could invite a person of your figure abroad at such unfashionable hours.

Sir G. There are some men, Charles, whom fortune has left free from inquietudes, who are diligently studious to find out ways and means to make themselves uneasy.

Charles. Is it possible that any thing in nature can ruffle the temper of a man whom the four seasons of the year compliment with as many thousand pounds ; nay, and a father at rest with his ancestors ?

Sir G. Why, there it is now ! a man that wants money thinks none can be unhappy that has it ; but my affairs are in such a whimsical posture, that it will require a calculation of my nativity to find if my gold will relieve me or not.

Charles. Ha, ha, ha ! never consult the stars about that ; gold has a power beyond them. Then what can thy business be that gold won't serve thee in ?

Sir G. Why I'm in love.

Charles. In love !—Ha, ha, ha, ha ! in love !—Ha, ha, ha, ha ! with what, pr'ythee ? a cherubin ?

Sir G. No ; with a woman.

Charles. A woman ! good. Ha, ha, ha, ha ! and gold not help thee ?

Sir G. But suppose I'm in love with two——

Charles. Ay, if thou'rt in love with two hundred, gold will fetch 'em, I warrant thee, boy. But who are they ? who are they ? come.

Sir G. One is a lady whose face I never saw, but witty to a miracle ; the other beautiful as Venus——

Charles. And a fool——

Sir G. For aught I know, for I never spoke to her ; but you can inform me. I am charm'd by the wit of the one, and die for the beauty of the other.

Charles. And pray which are you in quest of now ?

Sir G. I prefer the sensual pleasure ; I'm for her I've seen, who is thy father's ward, Miranda.

Charles. Nay, then I pity you ; for the Jew, my father, will no more part with her and thirty thousand pounds than he would with a guinea to keep me from starving.

Sir G. Now you see gold can't do every thing, Charles.

Charles. Yes ; for 'tis her gold that bars my father's gate against you.

Sir G. Why, if he be this avaricious wretch, how cam'st thou by such a liberal education?

Charles. Not a souse out of his pocket, I assure you: I had an uncle who defray'd that charge! but for some little wildness of youth, though he made me his heir, left dad my guardian till I came to years of discretion, which I presume the old gentleman will never think I am; and now he has got the estate into his clutches, it does me no more good than if it lay in Prester John's dominions.

Sir G. What, canst thou find no stratagem to redeem it?

Charles. I have made many essays to no purpose; though want, the mistress of invention, still tempts me on, yet still the old fox is too cunning for me.—I am upon my last project, which if it fails, then for my last refuge, a brown musket.

Sir G. What is't? can I assist thee?

Charles. Not yet; when you can, I have confidence enough in you to ask it.

Sir G. I am always ready. But what does he intend to do with Miranda? Is she to be sold in private, or will he put her up by way of auction, at who bids most? If so, 'egad I'm for him; my gold, as you say, shall be subservient to my pleasure.

Charles. To deal ingenuously with you, sir George, I know very little of her or home; for since my uncle's death, and my return from travel, I have never been well with my father; he thinks my expenses too great, and I his

allowance too little ; he never sees me but he quarrels, and to avoid that I shun his house as much as possible. The report is he intends to marry her himself.

Sir G. Can she consent to it ?

Charles. Yes faith, so they say : but I tell you I am wholly ignorant of the matter. I fancy she plays the mother-in-law already, and sets the old gentleman on to do mischief.

Sir G. Then I have your free consent to get her ?

Charles. Ay, and my helping hand, if occasion be.

Sir G. Poh ! yonder's a fool coming this way ; let's avoid him.

Charles. What, Marplot ? No, no, he's my instrument ; there's a thousand conveniences in him ; he'll lend me his money, when he has any, run of my errands and be proud on it ; in short he'll pimp for me, lie for me, drink for me, do any thing but fight for me ; and that I trust to my own arm for.

Sir G. Nay, then he's to be endured ; I never knew his qualifications before. (*Turns up the stage.*)

Enter MARLPLOT, L.H. with a Patch across his Face.

Mar. Dear Charles, your's—Ha ! sir George Airy ! the man in the world I have an ambition to be known to ! (*Aside.*) Give me thy hand dear boy. (*To Charles.*)

Charles. A good assurance ! But harkye, how came your beautiful countenance clouded in the wrong place ?

Mar. I must confess 'tis a little mal-a-propos ; but no matter for that. A word with you, Charles. Pr'ythee introduce me to sir George—he is a man of wit, and I'd give ten guineas to—

Charles. When you have 'em you mean.

Mar. Ay, when I have 'em ; pugh, plague, you cut the thread of my discourse—I would give ten guineas, I say to be rank'd in his acquaintance. But, prythee, introduce me.

Charles. Well, on condition you'll give us a true account how you came by that mourning nose, I will.

Mar. I'll do it.

Charles. Sir George, here's a gentleman has a passionate desire to kiss your hand.

Sir G. (Advancing.) Oh ! I honour men of the sword ! and I presume this gentleman is lately come from Spain or Portugal—by his scars.

Mar. (Crosses to centre.) No really, sir George, mine sprung from civil fury. Happening last night into the groom porter's—I had a strong inclination to go ten guineas with a sort of a, sort of a—kind of a milksop, as I thought. A plague of the dice ! he flung out, and my pockets being empty, as Charles knows they often are, he proved a surly North Briton, and broke my face for my deficiency.

Sir G. Ha, ha ! and did not you draw ?

Mar. Draw, sir ! why I did but lay my hand upon my sword to make a swift retreat, and he roared out, Now the deel a ma sal, sir, gin ye

touch yer steel Ise whip mine through yer wem. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha!

Charles. Ha, ha, ha, ha! Safe was the word. So you walk'd off, I suppose.

Mar. Yes, for I avoid fighting, purely to be serviceable to my friends, you know—

Sir G. Your friends are much obliged to you, sir: I hope you'll rank me in that number.

Mar. Sir George, a bow from the side-box, or to be seen in your chariot, binds me ever your's.

Sir G. Trifles; you may command 'em when you please.

Charles. Provided he may command you.

Mar. Me! why I live for no other purpose—(*Crosses to centre.*)—Sir George, I have the honour to be carressed by most of the reigning toasts of the town: I'll tell 'em you are the finest gentleman—

Sir G. No, no, pr'ythee let me alone to tell the ladies—my parts—Can you convey a letter upon occasion, or deliver a message with an air of business, ha?

Mar. With the assurance of a page and the gravity of a statesman.

Sir G. You know Miranda?

Mar. What! my sister ward? why, her guardian is mine; we are fellow sufferers. Ah, he is a covetous, cheating, sanctified curmudgeon: that sir Francis Gripe is a damn'd old—hypocritical—

Charles. Hold, hold; I suppose, friend, you forget that he is my father.

Mar. I ask your pardon, Charles, but it is for your sake I hate him. Well, I say, the world is mistaken in him ; his outside piety makes him every man's executor, and his inside cunning makes him every heir's gaoler. 'Egad, Charles, I'm half persuaded that thou'rt some ward too, and never of his getting—for never were too things so unlike as you and your father ; he scrapes up every thing, and thou spend'st every thing ; every body is indebted to him, and thou art indebted to every body.

Charles. You are very free, Mr. Marplot.

Mar. Ay, I give and take, Charles—you may be as free with me, you know.

Sir G. A pleasant fellow.

Charles. The dog is diverting sometimes, or there would be no enduring his impertinence. He is pressing to be employed, and willing to execute ; but some ill fate generally attends all he undertakes, and he oftener spoils an intrigue than helps it.

Mar. I have always your good word, but if I miscarry 'tis none of my fault ; I follow my instructions.

Charles. Yes, witness the merchant's wife.

Mar. Pish, poh ! that was an accident.

Sir G. What was it, pr'ythee ?

Mar. Nay, Charles, now don't expose your friend.

Charles. Why, you must know I had lent a certain merchant my hunting horses, and was to have met his wife in his absence. Sending him along with my groom to make the compliment,

and to deliver a letter to the lady at the same time, what does he do but gives the husband the letter and offers her the horses.

Mar. Why, to be sure I did offer her the horses, and I remember you was even with me, for you denied the letter to be yours, and swore I had a design upon her, which my bones paid for.

Charles. (*Crosses to R.H.*) Come, sir George, let's walk round if you are not engaged, for I have sent my man upon a little earnest business, and I have ordered him to bring me the answer into the Park.

Mar. Business! and I not know it! 'Egad I'll watch him. (*Aside.*)

Sir G. I must beg your pardon, Charles, I am to meet your father.

Charles. My father!

Sir G. Ay, and about the oddest bargain perhaps you ever heard of; but I'll not impart till I know the success.

Mar. What can his business be with sir Francis! Now would I give all the world to know it. Why the devil should not one know every man's concerns! (*Aside.*)

Charles. Prosperity to't, whate'er it be: I have private affairs too: over a bottle we'll compare notes.

Mar. Charles knows I love a glass as well as any man; I'll make one; shall it be to-night? I long to know their secrets. (*Aside.*)

Enter WHISPER, R.H.

Whis. Sir, sir, Mrs. Patch says Isabinda's Spanish father has quite spoiled the plot, and she can't meet you in the Park, but he infallibly will go out this afternoon, she says; but I must step again to know the hour.

Mar. What did Whisper say now? I shall go stark mad if I'm not let into the secret. (*Aside.*)

Charles. Curst misfortune!

Mar. Curst! what's curst, Charles?

Charles. Come along with me, my heart feels pleasure at her name. Sir George, yours; we'll meet at the old place, the usual hour.

Sir G. (*Crosses to L.H.*) Agreed, I think I see sir Francis yonder. [*Exit L.H.*]

Charles. Marplot, you must excuse me; I am engag'd. [*Exit R.H.*]

Mar. Engag'd! 'Egad, I'll engage my life I'll know what your engagement is. [*Exit, R.H.*]

Enter MIRANDA, R.H.U.E.

Mir. Let the chair wait. My servant that dogg'd sir George said he was in the Park.

Enter PATCH, R.H.

Ha! miss Patch alone! did not you tell me you had contrived a way to bring Isabinda to the Park?

Patch. Oh, madam, your ladyship can't imagine what a wretched disappointment we have

met with! Just as I had fetch'd a suit of my clothes for a disguise, comes my old master into his closet, which is right against her chamber door: this struck us into a terrible fright—at length I put on a grave face, and asked him if he was at leisure for his chocolate? in hopes to draw him out of his hole; but he snapp'd my nose off: "No, I shall be busy here these two hours." At which my poor mistress, seeing no way of escape, ordered me to wait on your ladyship with the sad relation.

Mir. Unhappy Isabinda! was ever any thing so unaccountable as the humour of sir Jealous Traffick?

Patch. Oh, madam, it's his living so long in Spain; he vows he'll spend half his estate but he'll be a parliament man, on purpose to bring in a bill for women to wear veils, and other odious Spanish customs—He swears it is the height of impudence to have a woman seen bare-faced even at church, and scarce believes there's a true begotten child in the city.

Mir. Ha, ha, ha! how the old fool torments himself! Suppose he could introduce his rigid rules—does he think we could not match them in contrivance? No, no; let the tyrant man make what laws he will, if there's a woman under the government, I warrant she finds a way to break 'em. Is his mind set upon the Spaniard for his son-in-law, still?

Patch. Ay, and he expects him by the next fleet, which drives his daughter to melancholy and despair. But madam, I find you retain the

same gay, cheerful spirit you had when I waited on your ladyship—¹My lady is mighty good-humoured too, and I have found a way to make sir Jealous believe I am wholly in his interest, when my real design is to serve her : he makes me her gaoler, and I set her at liberty.

Mir. I knew thy prolific brain would be of singular service to her, or I had not parted with thee to her father.

Patch. But, madam, the report is that you are going to marry your guardian.

Mir. It is necessary such a report should be, Patch.

Patch. But is it true, madam ?

Mir. That's not absolutely necessary.

Patch. I thought it was only the old strain, coaxing him still for your own, and railing at all the young fellows about town : in my mind now you are as ill plagu'd with your guardian, madam, as my lady is with her father.

Mir. No, I have liberty wench ; that she wants : what would she give now to be in this dishabille in the open air, nay more, in pursuit of the young fellow she likes ? for that's my case, I assure you.

Patch. As for that, madam, she's even with you ; for though she can't come abroad, we have a way to bring him home in spite of old Argus.

Mir. Now, Patch, your opinion of my choice, for here he comes—Ha ! my guardian with him ! what can be the meaning of this ? I'm sure sir

Francis can't know me in this dress.—Let's observe 'em.
9(*They withdraw.*)

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE and SIR GEORGE
AIRY, L.H.

Sir F. Verily, sir George, thou wilt repent throwing away thy money so, for I tell thee sincerely, Miranda, my charge, does not like a young fellow; they are all vicious, and seldom make good husbands: in sober sadness she cannot abide 'em.

Mir. (Peeping.) In sober sadness you are mistaken—What can this mean?

Sir G. Lookye, sir Francis, whether she can or cannot abide young fellows is not the business: will you take the fifty guineas?

Sir F. In good truth I will not—for I knew thy father, he was a hearty wary man, and I cannot consent that his son should squander away what he saved to no purpose.

Mir. (Peeping.) Now, in the name of wonder, what bargain can he be driving about me for fifty guineas?

Sir G. Well, sir Francis, since you are so conscientious for my father's sake, then permit me the favour gratis.

Sir F. No verily; if thou dost not buy thy experience thou wilt never be wise; therefore give me a hundred and try thy fortune.

Sir G. The scruples arose, I find, from the scanty sum—Let me see—a hundred guineas—(*Takes the Money out of a Purse and chinks it.*)

Ha! they have a very pretty sound, and a very pleasing look—But then, Miranda—but if she should be cruel—

Sir F. Ay, do consider on't. He, he, he!

Sir G. No, I'll do't. Come, to the point; here's the gold; sum up the conditions.—

(*Sir Francis pulls out a Paper.*)

Mir. (*Peeping.*) Ay, for heaven's sake do, for my expectation is on the rack.

Sir F. Well, at your peril be it.

Sir G. Ay, ay, go on.

Sir F. Imprimis, you are to be admitted into my house in order to move your suit to Miranda, for the space of ten minutes, without let or molestation, provided I remain in the same room.

Sir G. But out of ear-shot.

Sir F. Well, well, I don't desire to hear what you say; ha, ha, ha! in consideration I am to have that purse and a hundred guineas.

Sir G. Take it. (*Gives him the Purse.*) And this agreement is to be performed to-day.

Sir F. Ay, ay; the sooner the better. Poor fool! how Miranda and I shall laugh at him! (*Aside.*)—well sir George, ha, ha, ha! take the last sound of your guineas, ha, ha, ha!

[*Chinks them.—Exit, R.H.*]

Mir. (*Peeping.*) Sure he does not know I am Miranda.

Sir G. A very extraordinary bargain I have made, truly; if she should be really in love with this old cuff now—Pshaw! that's morally impossible.—But then, what hopes have I to succeed? I never spoke to her—

Mir. (*Peeping.*) Say you so? then I am safe.

Sir G. What though my tongue never spoke, my eyes said a thousand things, and my hopes flattered me her's answer'd 'em. If I'm lucky—if not, it is but a hundred guineas thrown away. (*Mir. comes forward, R.H.*)

Mir. Upon what, sir George?

Sir G. Ha! my incognita—upon a woman, madam.

Mir. They are the worst things you can deal in, and damage the soonest; your very breath destroys 'em, and I fear you'll never see your return, sir George, ha, ha!

Sir G. Were they more brittle than china, and dropped to pieces with a touch, every atom as her I have ventur'd at, if she is but mistress of thy wit, balances ten times the sum.—Pr'ythee, let me see thy face.

Mir. By no means; that may spoil your opinion of my sense—

Sir G. Rather confirm it, madam.

Patch. (*L.H.*) So rob the lady of your gallantry, sir.

Sir G. No child, a dish of chocolate in the morning never spoils my dinner: the other lady I design for a set meal; so there's no danger.—

Mir. Matrimony! ha, ha, ha! what crimes have you committed against the god of love, that he should revenge 'em so severely, as to stamp husband on your forehead?

Sir G. For my folly in having so often met you here without pursuing the laws of nature

and exercising her command; (*Patch crosses behind to R.H.*) but I resolve ere we part now to know who you are, where you live, what kind of flesh and blood your face is; therefore unmask, and don't put me to the trouble of doing it for you.

Mir. My face is the same flesh and blood with my hand, sir George; which if you'll be so rude to provoke—

Sir G. You'll apply it to my cheek—the ladies' favours are always welcome, but I must have that cloud withdrawn. (*Taking hold of her.*) Remember you are in the Park, child; and what a terrible thing would it be to lose this pretty white hand!

Mir. And how it will sound in a chocolate-house, that sir George Airy rudely pulled off a lady's mask, when he had given her his honour that he never would directly or indirectly, endeavour to know her till she gave him leave?

Sir G. But if that lady thinks fit to pursue and meet me at every turn, like some troubled spirit, shall I be blamed if I inquire into the reality? I would have nothing dissatisfied in a female shape.

Mir. What shall I do? (*Pauses.*)

Sir G. Ay, pr'ythee, consider, for thou shalt find me very much at thy service.

Patch. Suppose, sir, the lady should be in love with you.

Sir G. Oh! I'll return the obligation in a moment.

Patch. And marry her?

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha! that's not the way to love her, child.

Mir. If he discovers me I shall die——Which way shall I escape?—let me see. (*Pauses.*)

Sir G. Well, madam—

Mir. I have it—Sir George, 'tis fit you should allow something; if you'll excuse my face, and turn your back (if you look upon me I shall sink, even masked as I am,) I will confess why I have engaged you so often, who I am, and where I live.

Sir G. Well to show you I am a man of honour, I accept the conditions: let me but once know those, and the face wont be long a secret to me.

Patch. What mean you, madam?

(*Aside to Mir.*)

Mir. To get off.

(*Aside to Patch.*)

Sir G. 'Tis something indecent to turn one's back upon a lady; but you command, and I obey. (*Turns his back*) Come, madam, begin—

Mir. First, then, it was my unhappy lot to see you at Paris (*Draws back a little way, and speaks,*) at a ball upon a birth-day; your shape and air charm'd my eyes, your wit and complaisance my soul, and from that fatal night I lov'd you.

(*Drawing back.*)

And when you left the place, grief seiz'd me
so, [know;

Nor rest my heart nor sleep my eyes could
Last I resolv'd a hazardous point to try,
And quit the place in search of liberty.

[*Exit, R.H. followed by Patch.*]

Sir G. Excellent—I hope she's handsome—Well now, madam, to the two other things, your name, and where you live—I am a gentleman, and this confession will not be lost upon me—Nay, pr'ythee, don't weep, but go on, for I find my heart melts in thy behalf—Speak quickly, or I shall turn about—Not yet —Poor lady! she expects I should comfort her, and to do her justice, she has said enough to encourage me. (*Turns about.*) Ha! gone! the devil! jilted! Why, what a tale she has invented—of Paris, balls, and birth-days!—'Egad, I'd give ten guineas to know who the gipsy is—A curse of my folly—I deserve to lose her. What woman can forgive a man that turns his back!

The bold and resolute in love and war
To conquer take the right and swiftest way:
The boldest lover soonest gains the fair,
As courage makes the rudest force obey:
Take no denial, and the dames adore ye;
Closely pursue them, and they fall before ye.
[*Exit, L.H.*]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Room in SIR FRANCIS GRIPE'S House.*

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE and MIRANDA, L.H.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha !

Mir. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha ! Oh ! I shall die with laughing,—the most romantic adventure—Ha, ha, ha ! what does the odious young fop mean ? A hundred pieces to talk ten minutes with me ! ha, ha, ha, ha !

Sir F. And I am to be by too, there's the jest ; adad, if it had been in private I should not have car'd to trust the young dog.

Mir. Indeed and indeed but you might, Gardy—Now methinks there's nobody handsomer than you : so neat, so clean, so good-humoured, and so loving—

Sir F. Pretty rogue, pretty rogue ! and so thou shalt find me, if thou dost prefer thy Gardy before these caperers of the age : thou shalt outshine the queen's box on an opera night ; thou shalt be the envy of the ring (for I will carry thee to Hyde-park,) and thy equipage shall surpass the—what d'ye call 'em ambassador's.

Mir. Nay, I am sure the discreet part of my sex will envy me more for the inside furniture, when you are in it, than my outside equipage.

Sir F. A cunning baggage, i'faith thou art,

and a wise one too ! and to show thee that thou hast not chose amiss, I'll this moment disinherit my son, and settle my whole estate upon thee.

Mir. There's an old rogue now. (*Aside.*) No Gardy, I would not have your name be so black in the world—You know my father's will runs that I am not to possess my estate, without your consent, till I am five-and-twenty ; you shall only abate the odd seven years, and make me mistress of my estate to-day, and I'll make you master of my person to-morrow.

Sir F. Humph ! that may not be safe—No, Chargy, I'll settle it upon thee for pin-money, and that will be every bit as well, thou know'st.

Mir. Unconscionable old wretch ! bribe me with my own money !—Which way shall I get out of his hands ? (*Aside.*)

Sir F. Well, what art thou thinking on, my girl, ha ? how to banter sir George ?

Mir. I must not pretend to banter ; he knows my tongue too well. (*Aside.*) No, Gardy, I have thought of a way will confound him more than all I could say, if I could talk to him seven years.

Sir F. How's that ? oh ! I'm transported, I'm ravish'd, I'm mad—

Mir. It would make you mad if you knew all. (*Aside.*) I'll not answer him a word, but be dumb to all he says.

Sir F. Dumb ! good ; ha, ha, ha ! Excellent ! ha, ha, ha, ha ! I think I have you now, sir George. Dumb ! he'll go distracted—well, she's the wittiest rogue.—Ha, ha, dumb ! I can't but laugh, ha, ha ! to think how damn'd mad

he'll be when he finds he has given his money away for a dumb show ! ha, ha, ha !

Mir. Nay, Gardy, if he did but know my thoughts of him it would make him ten times madder ; ha, ha, ha, ha !

Sir F. Ay, so it would, Chargy, to hold him in such derision, to scorn to answer him, to be dumb ; ha, ha, ha !

Enter CHARLES, L.H.

Sir F. How now, sirrah ! who let you in ?

Charles. My necessities, sir.

Sir F. Your necessities are very impertinent, and ought to have sent before they enter'd.

Charles. Sir, I knew 'twas a word would gain admittance no where.

Sir F. Then, sirrah, how durst you rudely thrust that upon your father, which nobody else would admit ?

Charles. Sure the name of a son is a sufficient plea ; I ask this lady's pardon, if I have intruded.

Sir F. Ay, ay, ask her pardon and her blessing too, if you expect any thing from me.

Mir. I believe your's, sir Francis, and a purse of guineas, would be more material. Your son may have business with you ; I'll retire.

Sir F. I guess his business, but I'll despatch him ; I expect the knight every minute : you'll be in readiness ?

Mir. Certainly. My expectation is more upon the wing than yours, old gentleman.

[Aside, and Exit, R.H.]

Sir F. Well, sir.

Charles. Nay, it is very ill, sir; my circumstances are, I'm sure.

Sir F. And what's that to me, sir? your management should have made 'em better.

Charles. If you please to intrust me with the management of my estate I shall endeavour it, sir.

Sir F. What, to set upon a card, and buy a lady's favour at the price of a thousand pieces, to rig out an equipage for a wench, or by your carelessness to enrich your steward to fine for sheriff, or put up for a parliament man?

Charles. I hope I should not spend it this way: however I ask only for what my uncle left me; yours you may dispose of as you please, sir.

Sir F. That I shall, out of your reach, I assure you, sir. Adad, these young fellows think old men get estates for nothing but them to squander away in dicing, wenching, drinking, dressing, and so forth.

Charles. I think I was born a gentleman, sir; I'm sure my uncle bred me like one.

Sir F. From which you would infer, sir, that gaming and wenching are requisites for a gentleman.

Charles. Monstrous! when I should ask him only for a support he falls into these unmannerly reproaches. I must though against my will, employ invention, and by stratagem relieve myself. (Aside.)

Sir F. Sirrah, what is it you mutter, sirrah,

ha ? (*Holds up his Cane.*) I say you shan't have a groat out of my hands till I please—and may be I'll never please ; and what's that to you ?

Charles. Nay, to be robb'd or have one's throat cut is not much— (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Sir F. What's that, sirrah ? would you rob me or cut my throat, you rogue ?

Charles. Heaven forbid, sir !—I said no such thing.

Sir F. Mercy on me ! what a plague it is to have a son of one-and twenty, who wants to elbow one out of one's life to edge himself into the estate !

Enter MARPLOT, L.H.

Mar. 'Egad he's here—I was afraid I had lost him : his secret could not be with his father ; his wants are public there.—Guardian, your servant—O Charles, are you there ? I know by that sorrowful countenance of thine, the old man's fist is as close as his strong box—But I'll help thee. (*Aside.*)

Sir F. So ! here's another extravagant coxcomb that will spend his fortune before he comes to't, but he shall pay swinging interest, and so let the fool go on.—Well, what does necessity bring you too, sir ?

Mar. You have hit it, Guardian—(*Crosses to centre.*) I want a hundred pounds.

Sir F. For what ?

Mar. Pugh ! for a hundred things ; I can't for my life tell you for what.

Charles. Sir, I suppose I have received all the answer I am like to have?

Mar. Oh, the devil! if he gets out before me I shall lose him again. *(Aside.)*

Sir F. Ay, sir, and you may be marching as soon as you please—I must see a change in your temper, ere you find one in mine.

Mar. Pray, sir, dispatch me; the money, sir; I'm in mighty haste.

Sir F. Fool, take this and go to the cashier. I shan't be long plagu'd with thee.

(Gives him a note.)

Mar. Devil take the cashier! *(Crosses to R.H.)* I shall certainly have Charles gone before I come back. *[Exit, R.H. running.]*

Charles. Well, sir, I take my leave—but remember you expose an only son to all the miseries of wretched poverty, which too often lays the plan for scenes of mischief.

Sir F. Stay, Charles I have a sudden thought come into my head which may prove to thy advantage.

Charles. Ha! does he relent?

Sir F. My lady Wrinkle, worth forty thousand pounds, sets up for a handsome young husband; she prais'd thee t'other day; though the match-makers can get twenty guineas for a sight of her, I can introduce thee for nothing.

Charles. My lady Wrinkle, sir! why, she has but one eye.

Sir F. Then she'll see but half your extravagance, sir.

Charles. Condemn me to such a piece of de-

formity ! a toothless, dirty, wry-neck'd, hunch-back'd hag !

Sir F. Hunch-back'd ! so much the better ! then she has a rest for her misfortunes, for thou wilt load her swingingly. Now, I warrant, you think this is no offer of a father ; forty thousand pounds is nothing with you.

Charles. Yes, sir, I think it too much ; a young beautiful woman with half the money would be more agreeable.—I thank you, sir ; but you choose better for yourself, I find.

Sir F. Out of my doors, you dog ! you pretend to meddle with my marriage, sirrah !

Charles. Sir, I obey you, but—

Sir F. But me no buts—be gone, sir ! dare to ask me for money again—refuse forty thousand pounds ! Out of my doors, I say, without reply.

[*Exit Charles, L.H.*]

Enter MARPLOT, R.H. running.

Mar. Ha ! gone ! is Charles gone, Gardy ?

Sir F. Yes, and I desire your wise worship to walk after him.

Mar. Nay, 'egad I shall run, I tell you that. A plague of the cashier for detaining me so long ! Where the devil shall I find him now ? I shall certainly lose this secret, and I had rather by half lose my money—Where shall I find him now—D'ye know where Charles is gone, Gardy ?

Sir F. Gone to the devil, and you may go after him.

Mar. Ay, that I will as fast as I can. (*Going returns.*) Have you any commands there, Gurdy? [*Exit, L.H.*]

Sir F. What, is the fellow distracted?

Enter SERVANT, L.H.

Servant. Sir George Airy inquires for you, sir.

Sir F. Desire sir George to walk up.—[*Exit Servant, L.H.*] Now for a trial of skill that will make me happy and him a fool. Ha, ha, ha! In my mind he looks like an ass already.

Enter SIR GEORGE AIRY, L.H.

Well, sir George, do you hold in the same mind, or would you capitulate? ha, ha, ha! Look, here are the guineas; (*Chinks them.*) ha, ha, ha!

Sir G. Not if they were twice the sum, sir Francis; therefore be brief, call in the lady, and take your post.

Sir F. Agreed. Miranda! [*Exit, R.H.*]

Sir G. If she's a woman, and not seduc'd by witchcraft, to this old rogue, I'll make his heart ache; for if she has but one grain of inclination about her, I'll vary a thousand shapes but find it.

Re-enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE and MIRANDA, R.H.

Sir G. So from the eastern chambers breaks the sun, Disperses the clouds, and gilds the vales below. (*Salutes her.*)

Sir F. Hold, sir ; kissing was not in our agreement.

Sir G. Oh ! that's by way of prologue. Pr'ythee, old Mammon, to thy post.

Sir F. (*Takes out his watch.*) Well, young Timon, 'tis now four exactly ; ten minutes, remember, is your utmost limit ; not a minute more.

(*Retires to the Bottom of the Stage.*)

Sir G. Madam, whether you'll excuse or blame my love, the author of this rash proceeding depends upon your pleasure, as also the life of your admirer ; your sparkling eyes speak a heart susceptible of love, your vivacity a soul too delicate to admit the embraces of decayed mortality. Shake off this tyrant guardian's yoke ; assume yourself, and dash his bold, aspiring hopes. The deity of his desires is avarice, a heretic in love, and ought to be banished by the queen of beauty. (*Kneels.*) See, madam, a faithful servant kneels, and begs to be admitted in the number of your slaves.

(*Miranda gives him her Hand to raise him.*)

Sir F. (*Running up.*) Hold, hold, hold ! no palming ; that's contrary to articles—

Sir G. 'Sdeath, sir, keep your distance, or I'll write another article in your guts.

(*Lays his Hand to his Sword.*)

Sir F. (*Going back.*) A bloody minded fellow !

Sir G. Not answer me ! perhaps she thinks my address too grave : I'll be more free. (*Aside.*) Can you be so unconscionable, madam, to let me say all these fine things to you without one single compliment in return ?

Sir F. (Running up with his Watch in his hand.)
There's five of the ten minutes gone, sir George—
—Adad, I don't like those close conferences—

Sir G. More interruptions—you will have it, sir!
(Lays his Hand to his Sword.)

Sir F. (Going back.) No, no; you shan't have her neither. *(Aside.)*

Sir G. Dumb still—sure this old dog has enjoin'd her silence. I'll try another way. *(Aside.)*
Madam these few minutes cost me an hundred pounds—and would you answer me, I could purchase the whole day so. However, madam, you must give me leave to make the best interpretation I can for my money, and take the indication of your silence for the secret liking of my person; therefore, madam, I will instruct you how to keep your word inviolate to sir Francis, and yet answer me to every question: as for example, when I ask any thing to which you would reply in the affirmative, gently nod your head thus, *(Nods.)* and when in the negative, thus, *(Shakes his head.)* and in the doubtful, a tender sigh thus. *(Sighs.)*

Mir. How every action charms me—but I'll fit him for signs, I warrant him. *(Aside.)*

Sir G. Was it by his desire that you are dumb, madam, to all I can say? *(Miranda nods.)* Very well, she's tractable, I find! *(Aside.)* And is it possible that you can love him? *(Miranda nods.)* Miraculous! Pardon the bluntness of my questions, for my time is short. May I not hope to supplant him in your esteem? *(Miranda sighs.)* Good! she answers me as I could wish. *(Aside.)*

You'll not consent to marry him then? (*Miranda sighs.*) How! doubtful in that?—Undone again—humph! but that may proceed from his power to keep her out of her estate 'till twenty-five: I'll try that. (*Aside.*) Come, madam, I cannot think you hesitate in this affair out of any motive but your fortune—let him keep it till those few years are expired; make me happy with your person, let him enjoy your wealth. (*Miranda holds up her Hands.*) Why, what sign is that now? Nay, nay, madam, except you observe my lesson I can't understand your meaning.

Sir F. What a vengeance! are they talking by signs? 'Ad, I may be fool'd here. (*Aside.*) What do you mean, sir George?

Sir G. To cut your throat, if you dare mutter another syllable.

Sir F. 'Od, I wish he were fairly out of my house. (*Aside.*)

Sir G. Pray, madam, will you answer me to the purpose? (*Miranda shakes her Head, and points to Sir Francis.*) What does she mean? She won't answer me to the purpose, or is she afraid yon' old cuff should understand her signs?—ay, it must be that. (*Aside.*) I perceive, madam, you are too apprehensive of the promise you have made to follow my rules, therefore I'll suppose your mind, and answer for you.—First for myself, madam; “that I am in love with you is an infallible truth.” Now for you. (*Turns on her side.*) “Indeed, sir! and may I believe it?”—“As certainly, madam, as that 'tis daylight, or that I die if you persist in silence.”

—“ Bless me with the music of your voice, and raise my spirits to their proper heaven. (*Kneels.*) Thus low let me entreat ere I’m obliged to quit this place ; grant me some token of a favourable reception to keep my hopes alive.” (*Arises hastily, and turns on her side.*) “ Rise, sir, and since my guardian’s presence will not allow me privilege of tongue, read that, and rest assur’d you are not indifferent to me.” (*Offers her a letter, she strikes it down.*) Ha, right woman ! but no matter : I’ll go on.

Sir F. Ha ! what’s that ? a letter !—Ha, ha, ha ! thou art balk’d.

Sir G. Ha ! a letter ! oh ! let me kiss it with the same raptures that I would do the dear hand that touch’d it. (*Opens it.*) Now for a quick fancy, and a long extempore. (*Aside.*)

Sir F. (*Coming up hastily.*) The time is expired, sir, and you must take your leave. There, my girl, there’s the hundred pounds which thou hast won. Go ; I’ll be with you presently ; ha, ha, ha, ha !

[*Exit Miranda, R.H.*]

Sir G. Adsheart, madam, you won’t leave me just in the nick, will you ?

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha ! she has nick’d you, sir George, I think ! ha, ha, ha ! Have you any more hundred pounds to throw away upon courtship ? ha, ha, ha !

Sir G. He, he, he, he ! A curse of your fleering jests !—Yet, however ill I have succeeded, I’ll venture the same wager she does not value thee a spoonful of snuff—nay more, though you

enjoin'd her silence to me, you'll never make her speak to the purpose with yourself.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha ! Did I not tell thee thou would'st repent thy money ? Did I not say she hated young fellows ? ha, ha, ha !

Sir G. And I'm positive she's not in love with age.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha ! no matter for that, ha, ha ! She's not taken with your youth, nor your rhetoric to boot ; ha, ha !

Sir G. Whate'er her reasons are for disliking of me, I am certain she can be taken with nothing about thee.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha ! how he swells with envy—Poor man ! poor man ! ha, ha, ha ! I must beg your pardon, sir George ; Miranda will be impatient to have her share of mirth. Verily we shall laugh at thee most egregiously ; ha, ha, ha !

Sir G. With all my heart, faith—I shall laugh in my turn too—for if you dare marry her, old Belzebub, you will be cuckolded most egregiously : remember that, and tremble.

[*Exeunt, Sir G. L.H. Sir F. R.H.*]

SCENE II.—*Sir Jealous Traffick's House.*

Enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK, ISABINDA, and PATCH, L.H.

Sir J. What, in the balcony again, notwithstanding my positive commands to the contrary ? —Why don't you write a bill on your forehead to show passengers there's something to be let ?

Isa. What harm can there be in a little fresh air, sir?

Sir J. Is your constitution so hot, mistress, that it wants cooling, ha? Apply the virtuous Spanish rules; banish your taste and thoughts of flesh, feed upon roots, and quench your thirst with water.

Isa. That, and a close room, would certainly make me die of the vapours.

Sir J. No, mistress, 'tis your high-fed, lusty, rambling, rampant ladies—that are troubled with the vapours: 'tis your ratafia, persico, cinnamon, citron, and spirit of clara, cause such swimming in the brain, that carries many a guinea full tide to the doctor: but you are not to be bred this way: no galloping abroad, no receiving visits at home, for in our loose country the women are as dangerous as the men.

Patch. So I told her, sir, and that it was not decent to be seen in a balcony—but she threatened to slap my chops, and told me I was her servant, not her governess.

Sir J. Did she so? but I'll make her to know that you are her duenna. Oh, that incomparable custom of Spain! Why, here's no depending upon old women in my country—for they are as wanton at eighty as a girl of eighteen; and a man may as safely trust to Asgil's translation, as to his great grandmother's not marrying again.

Isa. Or to the Spanish ladies' veils and duennas for the safeguard of their honour.

Sir J. Dare to ridicule the cautious conduct

of that wise nation, and I'll have you lock'd up this fortnight, without a peep-hole.

Isa. If we had but the ghostly helps in England which they have in Spain, I might deceive you if you did—Let me tell you, sir, confinement sharpens the invention, as want of sight strengthens the other senses, and is often more pernicious than the recreation that innocent liberty allows.

Sir J. Say you so, mistress ! who the devil taught you the art of reasoning ? I assure you they must have a greater faith than I pretend to, that can think any woman innocent who requires liberty ; therefore, Patch, to your charge I give her ; lock her up till I come back from 'Change. I shall have some sauntering coxcomb with nothing but a red coat and a feather, think by leaping into her arms to leap into my estate—but I'll prevent them ; she shall be only signior Babinetto's.

Patch. Really, sir, I wish you would employ any body else in this affair ; I lead a life like a dog in obeying your commands. Come, madam, will you be locked up ?

Isa. Ay, to enjoy more freedom than he is aware of.

[*Aside.—Exit with Patch, L.H.*]

Sir J. I believe this wench is very true to my interest : I am happy I met with her, if I can but keep my daughter from being blown upon till signior Babinetto arrives, who shall marry her as soon as he comes, and carry her to Spain as soon as he has married her. She has a pregnant wit, and I'd no more have her an English wife than the grand signior's mistress. [Exit, R.H.]

SCENE III.—*Outside of Sir Jealous Traffick's House.*

(*Sir J. comes from his house, looks about—then Exit, R.H.*)

Enter WHISPER, R.H.U.E.

Whis. So, there goes sir Jealous : where shall I find Mrs. Patch, now ?

Enter PATCH, L.H.D.

Patch. Oh, Mr. Whisper ! my lady saw you out of the window, and order'd me to bid you fly and let your master know she's now alone.

Whis. Hush ! speak softly ! I go, I go ! But harkye, Mrs. Patch, shall not you and I have a little confabulation, when my master and your lady are engag'd ?

Patch. Ay, ay ; farewell. (*Goes in and shuts the Door. Whisper peeps after her through the Key-hole.*)

Re-enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK, R.H. meeting WHISPER.

Sir J. Sure, whilst I was talking with Mr. Tradewell, I heard my door clap. (*Seeing Whisper.*) Ha ! a man lurking about my house ! Who do you want there, sir ?

Whis. Want—want—a plague ! Sir Jealous ! What must I say now ? (*Aside.*)

Sir J. Ay, want ! Have you a letter or message for any body there ?—O'my conscience, this is some he bawd—

Whis. Letter or message, sir ?

Sir J. Ay, letter or message, sir ?

Whis. No, not I, sir.

Sir J. Sirrah, sirrah ! I'll have you set in the stocks if you don't tell your business immediately.

Whis. Nay, sir, my business—is no great matter of business neither, and yet 'tis business of consequence too.

Sir J. Sirrah, don't trifle with me.

Whis. Trifle, sir ! have you found him, sir ?

Sir J. Found what, you rascal ?

Whis. Why, Trifle is the very lapdog my lady lost, sir ; I fancied I saw him run into this house. I'm glad you have him—Sir, my lady will be overjoy'd that I have found him.

Sir J. Who is your lady, friend ?

Whis. My lady Lovepuppy, sir.

Sir J. My lady Lovepuppy, sir ! then pr'ythee carry thyself to her, for I know of no other whelp that belongs to her ; and let me catch you no more puppy-hunting about my doors, lest I have you press'd into the service, sirrah.

Whis. By no means, sir—Your humble servant.—I must watch whether he goes or no before I can tell my master. (*Aside.*) [*Exit, R.H.*]

Sir J. This fellow has the officious leer of a pimp, and I half suspect a design ; but I'll be upon them before they think on me, I warrant 'em.

[*Exit into the House.*]

SCENE IV.—*Charles's Lodgings.*

'Enter CHARLES and MARPLOT, R.H.

Charles. Honest Marplot, I thank thee for this supply. I expect my lawyer with a thousand pounds I have ordered him to take up, and then you shall be repaid.

Mar. Pho, pho! no more of that. Here comes sir George Airy,

Enter SIR GEORGE AIRY, L.H.

cursedly out of humour at his disappointment. See how he looks! ha, ha, ha!

Sir G. Ah, Charles! I am so humbled in my pretensions to plots upon women, that I believe I shall never have courage enough to attempt a chambermaid again—I'll tell thee—

Charles. Ha, ha! I'll spare you the relation by telling you—Impatient to know your business with my father, when I saw you enter I slipp'd back into the next room, where I overheard every syllable.

Mar. Did you Charles? I wish I had been with you.

Sir G. That I said—but I'll be hang'd if you heard her answer—But pr'ythee tell me, Charles, is she a fool?

Charles. I never suspected her for one; but Marplot can inform you better, if you'll allow him a judge.

Mar. A fool! I'll justify she has more wit than all the rest of her sex put together. Why, she'll rally me till I han't a word to say for myself.

Charles. A mighty proof of her wit, truly—

Mar. There must be some trick in't, sir George; 'egad, I'll find it out, if it cost me the sum you paid for't.

Sir G. Do, and command me—

Mar. Enough: let me alone to trace a secret—

Enter WHISPER, L.H. and speaks aside to his Master.

The devil! he here again! damn that fellow, he never speaks out. Is this the same, or a new secret? (*Aside.*) You may speak out, here are none but friends.

Charles. Pardon me, Marplot, 'tis a secret.

Mar. A secret! ay, or ecod I would not give a farthing for it. Sir George, won't you ask Charles what news Whisper brings?

Sir G. Not I, sir; I suppose it does not relate to me.

Mar. Lord, lord! how little curiosity some people have! Now my chief pleasure is in knowing every body's business.

[*Exit Whisper, R.H.*]

Sir G. I fancy, Charles, thou hast some engagement upon thy hands?

Mar. Have you, Charles?

Sir G. I have a little business too.

Mar. Have you, sir George?

Sir G. Marplot, if it falls in your way to bring

me any intelligence from Miranda, you'll find me at the Thatch'd-house, at six—

Mar. You do me much honour.

Charles. You guess right, sir George; wish me success.

Sir G. Better than attended me. Adieu.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

Charles. Marplot, you must excuse me—

Mar. Nay, nay; what need of any excuse amongst friends? I'll go with you.

Charles. Indeed you must not.

Mar. No! then I suppose 'tis a duel; and I will go to secure you.

Charles. Well, but 'tis no duel, consequently no danger; therefore pr'ythee be answer'd.

Mar. What is't a mistress then?—Mum—you know I can be silent upon occasion.

Charles. I wish you could be civil too: I tell you, you neither must nor shall go with me. Farewell.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

Mar. Why then—I must and will follow you.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Street.*

Enter CHARLES, R.H.

Charles. Well, here's the house which holds

the lovely prize, quiet and serene : here no noisy footmen throng to tell the world that beauty dwells within, no ceremonious visit makes the lover wait, no rival to give my heart a pang. Who would not scale the window at midnight without fear of the jealous father's pistol, rather than fill up the train of a coquette, where every minute he is jostled out of place ? (*Knocks softly.*) Mrs. Patch ! Mrs. Patch !

Enter PATCH, from the House.

Patch. Oh, are you come, sir ? All's safe.

Charles. So in, in then. (*They go in.*)

Enter MARPLOT, R.H.

Mar. There he goes ! Who the devil lives here ? Except I find out that, I am as far from knowing his business as ever. 'Gad I'll watch ; it may be a bawdy-house, and he may have his throat cut. If there should be any mischief, I can make oath he went in. Well, Charles, in spite of your endeavours to keep me out of the secret, I may save your life for aught I know. At that corner I'll plant myself ; there I shall see whoever goes in or comes out. 'Gad, I love discoveries. [*Exit, R.H.*

SCENE II.—*A Chamber in the House of Sir Jealous Traffick.*

Enter CHARLES, ISABINDA, and PATCH, R.H.

Isa. Patch, look out sharp ; have a care of dad.

Patch. I warrant you. [*Exit, L.H.*

Isa. Well, sir, if I may judge your love by your courage, I ought to believe you sincere ; for you venture into the lion's den when you come to see me.

Charles. If you'll consent whilst the furious beast is abroad, I'd free you from the reach of his paws.

Isa. That would be but to avoid one danger by running into another, like poor wretches who fly the burning ship, and meet their fate in the water. Come, come, Charles, I fear, if I consult my reason, confinement and plenty is better than liberty and starving. I know you would make the frolic pleasing for a little time, by saying and doing a world of tender things ; but when our small substance is exhausted, and a thousand requisites for life are wanting, love, who rarely dwells with poverty, would also fail us.

Charles. 'Faith, I fancy not ; methinks my heart has laid up a stock will last for life, to back which I have taken a thousand pounds upon my uncle's estate ; that surely will support us till one of our father's relent.

Isa. There's no trusting to that, my friend : I doubt your father will carry his humour to the grave, and mine till he sees me settled in Spain.

Charles. And can you then cruelly resolve to stay till that curs'd Don arrives, and suffer that youth, beauty, fire, and wit to be sacrific'd to the arms of a dull Spaniard, to be immured, and forbid the sight of any thing that's human ?

Isa. No ; when it comes to that extremity, and no stratagem can relieve us, thou shalt list for a soldier, and I'll carry thy knapsack after thee.

Charles. Bravely resolv'd ! the world cannot be more savage than our parents, and fortune generally assists the bold, therefore consent, now why should she put it to a future hazard ? who knows when we shall have another opportunity ?

Isa. Oh, you have your ladder of ropes I suppose and the closet window stands just where it did ; and if you han't forgot to write in characters, Patch will find a way for our assignments. Thus much of the Spanish contrivance my father's severity has taught me ; I thank him : though I hate the nation, I admire their management in these affairs.

Enter PATCH, L.H.

Patch. Oh, madam ! I see my master coming up the street.

Charles. Oh, the devil ! 'would I had my ladder now ! I thought you had not expected

him till night. Why, why, why, why, what shall I do, madam?

Isa. Oh! for heaven's sake don't go that way; you'll meet him full in the teeth. Oh, unlucky moment!

Charles. 'Adsheart! can you shut me into no cupboard, nor ram me into a chest, ha?

Patch. Impossible, sir; he searches every hole in the house.

Isa. Undone for ever! If he sees you I shall never see you more.

Patch. I have thought on it; run you to your chamber, madam; and, sir, come you along with me; I'm certain you may easily get down from the balcony.

Charles. My life! adieu—Lead on guide.

[*Exeunt Patch and Charles, R.H.*

Isa. Heavens preserve him. [*Exit, L.H.*

SCENE III.—*The Street.*

Enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK, R.H. followed by MARPLOT.

Sir J. I don't know what's the matter, but I have a strong suspicion all is not right within; that fellow's sauntering about my door, and his tale of a puppy, had the face of a lie, methought. By St. Iago, if I should find a man in the house I'd make mince meat of him—

Mar. Mince-meat! Ah, poor Charles! how I sweat for thee! 'Egad, he's old—I fancy I might bully him, and make Charles have an opinion of

my courage. 'Egad I'll pluck up, and have a touch with him.

Sir J. My own key shall let me in ; I'll give them no warning. *(Feeling for his key.)*

Mar. What's that you say, sir ?

(Going up to sir Jealous.)

Sir J. What's that to you, sir ?

(Turns quick upon him.)

Mar. Yes, 'tis to me, sir ; for the gentleman you threaten is a very honest gentleman. Look to't ; for if he comes not as safe out of your house as he went in—

Sir J. What, is he in then ?

Mar. Yes, sir, he is in then ; and I say if he does not come out, I have half a dozen myrmidons hard by shall beat your house about your ears.

Sir J. Ah ! a combination to undo me—I'll myrmidon you, ye dog, you—Thieves ! thieves !
(Beats Marplot.)

Mar. Murder, murder ! I was not in your house, sir.

Enter SERVANT, L.H.

Serv. What's the matter, sir ?

Sir J. The matter, rascal ! you have let a man into my house ; but I'll flay him alive. Follow me ; I'll not leave a mouse-hole unsearch'd. If I find him, by St. Iago, I'll equip him for the opera.

Mar. A deuce of his cane ! there's no trusting to age—What shall I do to relieve Charles ?

'egad, I'll raise the neighbourhood.—Murder! murder!—(*Charles drops down upon him from the Balcony.*) Charles! faith, I'm glad to see thee safe out, with all my heart!

Charles. A plague of your bawling! how the devil came you here?

Mar. 'Egad, it's very well for you that I was here; I have done you a piece of service: I told the old thunderbolt that the gentleman that was gone in was—

Charles. Was it you that told him, sir? (*Laying hold of him.*) 'Sdeath! I could crush thee into atoms.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

Mar. What! will you choke me for my kindness?—Will my inquiring soul never leave searching into other people's affairs till it gets squeez'd out of my body? I dare not follow him now for my blood, he's in such a passion.—I'll go to Miranda; if I can discover aught that may oblige sir George, it may be a means to reconcile me again to Charles.

Sir J. (Within.) Look about! search, find him out!

Mar. Oh, the devil! there's old Crabstick again.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

SCENE IV.—*A Hall in the House of sir Jealous Traffick.*

Enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK and his Servants, L.H.

Sir J. Are you sure you have search'd every where?

Serv. Yes, from the top of the house to the bottom.

Sir J. Under the beds and over the beds?

Serv. Yes, and in them too, but found nobody, sir.

Sir J. Why, what could this rogue mean?

Enter ISABINDA and PATCH, R.H.

Patch. Take courage, madam ; I saw him safe out. *(Aside to Isabinda.)*

Isa. Bless me what's the matter, sir?

Sir J. You know best—Pray where's the man that was here just now?

Isa. What man, sir? I saw none.

Patch. Nor I, by the trust you repose in me. Do you think I would let a man come within these doors when you are absent?

Sir J. Ah, Patch! she may be too cunning for thy honesty ; *(Crosses to Patch.)* the very scout that he had set to give warning discovered it to me—and threatened me with half a dozen myrmidons—but I think I maul'd the villain. These afflictions you draw upon me, mistress.

(To Isabinda.)

Isa. Pardon me, sir, 'tis your own ridiculous humour draws you into these vexations, and gives every fool pretence to banter you.

Sir J. No, 'tis your idle conduct, your coquetish flirting into the balcony—Oh! with what joy shall I resign thee into the arms of don Diego Babinetto.

Isa. And with what industry shall I avoid him. *(Aside.)*

Sir J. Certainly that rogue had a message from somebody or other, but being balk'd by my coming popp'd that sham upon me. Come along, ye sots, let's see if we can find the dog again. Patch, lock her up, d'ye hear?

[*Exeunt sir Jealous and Servants, 1.H.*]

Patch. Yes, sir—Ay, walk till your heels ache, you'll find nobody, I promise you.

Isa. Who could that scout be he talks of?

Patch. Nay, I can't imagine, without it was Whisper.

Isa. Well, dear Patch! let's employ all our thoughts how to escape this horrid don Diego; my very heart sinks at his terrible name.

Patch. Fear not, madam; don Carlos shall be the man, or I'll lose the reputation of contriving; and then what's a chambermaid good for?

[*Exeunt, R.H.*]

SCENE V.—*Sir Francis Gripe's House.*

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE, L.H. and MIRANDA, R.H.

Mir. Well, Gardy, how did I perform the dumb scene.

Sir F. To admiration—Thou dear little rogue! let me buss thee for it: nay, adad I will, Chargy, so muzzle, and tuzzle, and hug thee; I will, i'faith, I will. (*Hugging and kissing her.*)

Mir. Nay, Gardy, don't be so lavish. Who would ride post when the journey lasts for life?

Sir F. Oh, I'm transported! When, when, my dear! wilt thou convince the world of the happy day? when shall we marry, ha?

Mir. There's nothing wanting but your consent, sir Francis.

Sir F. My consent! what does my charmer mean?

Mir. Nay, 'tis only a whim; but I'll have every thing according to form—therefore when you sign an authentic paper, drawn up by an able lawyer, that I have your leave to marry, the next day makes me yours, Gardy.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! a whim indeed! why is it not demonstration I give my leave when I marry thee?

Mir. Not for your reputation, Gardy; the malicious world will be apt to say you trick me into marriage, and so take the merit from my choice: now I will have the act my own, to let the idle fops see how much I prefer a man loaded with years and wisdom.

Sir F. Humph! Pr'ythee leave out years, Chargy; I'm not so old, as thou shalt find. Adad, I'm young: there's a caper for ye! (*Jumps.*)

Mir. Oh, never excuse it; why I like you the better for being old—but I shall suspect you don't love me if you refuse me this formality.

Sir F. Not love thee, Chargy! Adad, I do love thee better than, than, than, better than—what shall I say 'egad, better than money; i'faith I do—

Mir. That's false, I'm sure. (*Aside.*) To prove it do this then.

Sir F. Well, I will do it, Chargy, provided I bring a licence at the same time.

Mir. Ay, and a parson too, if you please. Ha,

ha, ha! I can't help laughing to think how all the young coxcombs about town will be mortified when they hear of our marriage.

Sir F. So they will, so they will! ha, ha, ha!

Mir. Well, I fancy I shall be so happy with my Gardy—

Sir F. If wearing pearls and jewels, or eating gold, as the old saying is, can make thee happy, thou shalt be so, my sweetest, my lovely, my charming, my—verily I know not what to call thee.

Mir. You must know, Gardy, that I'm so eager to have this business concluded, that I have employed my woman's brother, who is a lawyer in the Temple, to settle matters just to your liking; you are to give your consent to my marriage, which is to yourself you know: but, mum, you must take no notice of that. So then I will, that is, with your leave, put my writings into his hands; then to-morrow we come slap upon them with a wedding that nobody thought on, by which you seize me and my estate, and I suppose make a bonfire of your own act and deed.

Sir F. Nay but, Chargy, if—

Mir. Nay, Gardy, no ifs.—Have I refus'd three northern lords, two British peers, and half a score knights, to have you put in your ifs?

Sir F. So thou hast indeed, and I will trust to thy management. 'Od, I'm all of a fire.

Mir. 'Tis a wonder the dry stubble does not blaze. (*Aside.*)

Enter MARPLOT, L.H.

Sir F. How now, who sent for you, sir? What is the hundred pounds gone already?

Mar. No, sir; I don't want money now, Gardy.

Sir F. No, that's a miracle! but there's one thing you want, I'm sure.

Mar. Ay, what's that?

Sir F. Manners! What, had I no servants without?

Mar. None that could do my business, guardian, which is at present with this lady.

Mir. With me, Mr. Marplot? what is it I beseech you?

Sir F. Ay, sir, what is it? any thing that relates to her may be delivered to me.

Mar. I deny that.

Mir. That's more than I do, sir.

(Crosses to Mar.)

Mar. Indeed, madam! Why then to proceed: Fame says, you know best whether she tells truth or not, that you and my most conscionable guardian here design'd, contriv'd, plotted, and agreed to chouse a very civil, honest, honourable gentleman out of a hundred pounds: guilty or not?

Mir. That I contriv'd it!

Mar. Ay, you—you said never a word against it; so far you are guilty.

Sir F. Pray tell that civil, honest, honourable gentleman, that if he has any more such

sums to fool away, they shall be received like the last; ha, ha, ha! Chous'd, quotha! (*Crosses to centre.*) But, harkye, let him know at the same time, that if he dare to report I trick'd him of it, I shall recommend a lawyer to him, who shall show him a trick for twice as much. D'ye hear? tell him that.

Mar. So, and this is the way you use a gentleman, and my friend!

Mir. Is the wretch thy friend?

Mar. The wretch! lookye, madam, don't call names; 'egad, I won't take it.

Mir. Why, you won't beat me, will you? Ha, ha!

Mar. I don't know whether I will or no.

Sir F. Sir, I shall make a servant show you out at the window if you are saucy.

Mar. I am your most humble servant, guardian; I design to go out the same way I came in, I would only ask this lady one question. Don't you think he's a fine gentleman?

Sir F. Who's a fine gentleman?

Mar. Not you, Gardy, not you! Don't you think, in your soul, that sir George Airy is a very fine gentleman?

Mir. He dresses well.

Sir F. Which is chiefly owing to his tailor and valet de chambre.

Mar. Well! and who is your dress owing to, ha? There's a beau, ma'am—do but look at him!

Sir F. Sirrah!

Mir. And if being a beau be a proof of his being a fine gentleman, he may be so.

Mar. He may be so! Why, ma'am the judicious part of the world allow him wit, courage, gallantry, ay, and economy too, though I think he forfeited that character when he flung away a hundred pounds upon your dumb ladyship.

Sir F. Does that gall him? Ha, ha, ha!

Mir. So, sir George, remaining in deep discontent, has sent you his trusty squire, to utter his complaint. Ha, ha, ha!

Mar. Yes, madam! and you like a cruel hard-hearted Jew, value it no more—than I would your ladyship, were I sir George; you, you, you—

Mir. Oh, don't call names: I know you love to be employed, and I'll oblige you, and you shall carry him a message from me.

Mar. According as I like it. What is it?

Mir. Nay, a kind one, you may be sure—First, tell him I have chose this gentleman, to have and to hold, and so forth.

(Taking the hand of Sir F.)

Mar. Much good may it do you!

Sir F. Oh the dear rogue! how I dote on her!
(Aside.)

Mir. And advise his impertinence to trouble me no more, for I prefer sir Francis for a husband before all the universe.

Mar. Oh Lord, oh lord! she's bewitched, that's certain. Here's a husband for eighteen—here's a tit-bit for a young lady—here's a shape, an air, and a grace—here's bones rattling in a leathern bag—*(Turning sir Francis about.)* here's buckram and canvass to scrub you to repentance.

Sir F. Sirrah, my cane shall teach you repentance presently.

Mar. No, faith, I have felt its twin brother from just such a wither'd hand too lately.

Mir. One thing more; advise him to keep from the garden gate on the left hand, for if he dare to saunter there, about the hour of eight, as he us'd to do, he shall be saluted with a pistol or a blunderbuss.

Sir F. Oh, monstrous! Why, Chargy, did he use to come to the garden-gate?

Mir. The gardener describ'd just such another man that always watch'd his coming out, and fain would have brib'd him for his entrance—Tell him he shall find a warm reception if he comes this night.

Mar. Pistols and blunderbusses! 'Egad, a warm reception indeed! I shall take care to inform him of your kindness, and advise him to keep further off.

Mir. I hope he will understand my meaning better than to follow your advice. (*Aside.*)

Sir F. Thou hast sign'd, seal'd, and ta'en possession of my heart for ever, Chargy, ha, ha, ha! and for you, Mr. Saucebox, let me have no more of your messages, if ever you design to inherit your estate, gentleman.

Mar. Why, there 'tis now. Sure I shall be out of your clutches one day—Well, guardian, I say no more: but if you be not as arrant a cuckold as e'er drove bargain upon the Exchange, or paid attendance to a court, I am the son of a whetstone; and so your humble servant.

Mir. Mr. Marplot, don't forget the message ; ha, ha, ha, ha !

Mar. Nang, nang, nang ! [*Exit*, L.H.]

Sir F. I am so provok'd—'tis well he's gone.

Mir. Oh, mind him not, Gardy, but let's sign articles, and then—

Sir F. And then—Adad, I believe I am metamorphos'd, my pulse beats high, and my blood boils, methinks— (*Kissing and hugging her.*)

Mir. Oh, fie, Gardy ! be not so violent : consider the market lasts all the year.—Well, I'll in, and see if the lawyer be come : you'll follow.

[*Exit*, R.H.]

Sir. F. Ay, to the world's end, my dear ! Well, Frank, thou art a lucky fellow in thy old age to have such a delicate morsel, and thirty thousand pounds, in love with thee. I shall be the envy of bachelors, the glory of married men, and the wonder of the town. Some guardians would be glad to compound for part of the estate at dispatching an heiress, but I engross the whole.—O ! mihi præteritos referat si Jupiter annos !

[*Exit*, R.H.]

SCENE VI.— *A Tavern.*

SIR GEORGE AIRY and CHARLES discovered, with Wine, Pens, Ink, and Paper on the Table. WHISPER waiting.

Sir G. Nay, pr'ythee, don't be grave, Charles : misfortunes will happen. Ha, ha, ha ! 'tis some comfort to have a companion in our sufferings.

Charles. I am only apprehensive for Isabinda; her father's humour is implacable; and how far his jealousy may transport him to her undoing, shocks my soul to think.

Sir G. But since you escap'd undiscover'd by him, his rage will quickly lash into a calm, never fear it.

Charles. But who knows what that unlucky dog, Marplot, told him; nor can I imagine what brought him thither: that fellow is ever doing mischief; and yet, to give him his due, he never designs it. This is some blundering adventure wherein he thought to show his friendship, as he calls it! a curse on him!

Sir G. Then you must forgive him. What said he?

Charles. Said! nay, I had more mind to cut his throat, than to hear his excuses.

Sir G. Where is he?

Whis. Sir, I saw him go into sir Francis Gripe's, just now.

Charles. Oh! then he's upon your business, sir George, a thousand to one but he makes some mistake there too.

Sir G. Impossible, without he huffs the lady, and makes love to sir Francis.

Enter DRAWER, L.H.

Draw. Mr. Marplot is below, gentlemen, and desires to know if he may have leave to wait upon ye.

Charles. How civil the rogue is when he has done a fault!

Sir G. Ho! desire him to walk up. [*Exit Drawer, L.H.*] Pry'thee Charles, throw off this chagrin, and be good company.

Charles. Nay, hang him, I'm not angry with him.

Enter MARPLOT, L.H.

Do but mark his sheepish look, sir George.

Mar. Dear Charles! don't overwhelm a man already under insupportable affliction. I'm sure I always intend to serve my friends; but if my malicious stars deny the happiness, is the fault mine?

Sir G. Never mind him, Mr. Marplot; he's eat up with spleen. But tell me what says Miranda?

Mar. Says!—nay, we are all undone there too.

Charles. I told you so; nothing prospers that he undertakes.

Mar. Why, can I help her having chose your father for better for worse?

Charles. So; there's another of fortune's strokes. I suppose I shall be edged out of my estate with twins every year, let who will get 'em.

Sir G. What! is the woman really possess'd?

Mar. Yes, with the spirit of contradiction: she railed at you most prodigiously.

Sir G. That's no ill sign.

Mar. You'd say it was no good sign if you knew all.

Sir G. Why, pr'ythee ?

Mar. Harkye, sir George, let me warn you ; pursue your old haunt no more ; it may be dangerous. (*Charles sits down to write.*)

Sir G. My old haunt ! what do you mean ?

Mar. Why, in short then, since you will have it, Miranda vows if you dare approach the garden gate at eight o'clock, as you us'd, you shall meet with a warm reception.

Sir G. A warm reception !

Mar. Ay, a very warm reception—you shall be saluted with a blunderbuss, sir. These were her very words : nay, she bid me tell you so too.

Sir G. Ha ! the garden-gate at eight, as I us'd to do ! There must be meaning in this. Is there such a gate, Charles ?

Mar. Is there such a gate, Charles ?

Charles. Yes, yes, it opens into the Park : I suppose her ladyship has made many a scamper through it.

Sir G. It must be an assignation then. Ha ! my heart springs for joy ; 'tis a propitious omen. My dear Marplot ! let me embrace thee ; thou art my friend, my better angel.

Mar. What do you mean, sir George ?

Sir G. No matter what I mean. Here, take a bumper to the garden gate, you dear rogue, you !

Mar. You have reason to be transported, sir George ; I have sav'd your life.

Sir G. My life ! thou hast sav'd my soul, man.

Charles, if thou dost not pledge this health, may'st thou never taste the joys of love.

Charles. Whisper, be sure you take care how you deliver this. (*Gives him a Letter.*) Bring me the answer to my lodgings.

Whis. I warrant you, sir. (*To Charles.*)

Mar. Whither does that letter go? Now dare I not ask for my blood—That fellow knows more secrets than I do.—(*Aside.—Following Whisper as he is going.*)—Whisper! Whisper!

Whis. Sir! (*Aside to Mar.*)

Mar. Whisper, here's half a crown for you.

(*Aside to Whis.*)

Whis. Thank ye, sir. (*Aside to Mar.*)

Mar. Now where is that letter going?

(*Aside to Whis.*)

Whis. Into my pocket, sir. (*Aside to Mar.*)

[*Exit L.H.*]

Charles. Now I'm for you.

Sir G. To the garden-gate at the hour of eight, Charles: allons; huzza!

Charles. I begin to conceive you.

Mar. That's more than I do, 'egad—To the garden-gate, huzza! (*Drinks.*) But I hope you design to keep far enough off on't, sir George.

Sir G. Ay, ay, never fear that; she shall see I despise her frowns; let her use the blunderbuss against the next fool; she shan't reach me with the smoke, I warrant her; ha, ha, ha!

Mar. Ah, Charles! if you could receive a disappointment thus en cavalier, one should have some comfort in being beat for you.

Charles. The fool comprehends nothing.

(*Aside to Sir G.*)

Sir G. Nor would I have him. Pr'ythee, take him along with thee. (*Aside to Charles.*)

Charles. Enough. (*Aside to Sir G.*)

Sir G. I kiss both your hands—And now for the garden-gate.

It's beauty gives the assignation there,
And love too powerful grows t'admit of fear.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

Charles. Come, you shall go home with me.

Mar. Shall I! and are we friends, Charles?—
I am glad of it.

Charles. Come along. [*Exit, R.H.*]

Mar. 'Egad, Charles's asking me to go home with him gives me a shrewd suspicion there's more in the garden-gate than I comprehend. Faith, I'll give him the drop, and away to Gardy's and find it out. [*Exit, R.H.*]

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The outside of Sir Jealous Traffick's House; Patch Peeping out of the Door.*

Enter WHISPER, L.H.

Whis. Ha! Mrs. Patch, this is a lucky minute, to find you so readily; my master dies with impatience.

Patch. My lady imagin'd so, and by her orders I have been scouting this hour in search of you, to inform you that sir Jealous has invited some friends to supper with him to-night, which gives an opportunity to your master to make use of his ladder of ropes. The closet window shall be open, and Isabinda ready to receive him. Bid him come immediately.

Whis. Excellent! he'll not disappoint, I warrant him.—But hold, I have a letter here which I'm to carry an answer to. I cannot think what language the direction is.

Patch. Pho! 'tis no language, but a character which the lovers invented to avert discovery—Ha! I hear my old master coming down stairs; it is impossible you should have an answer: away, and bid him come himself for that. Be gone, we're ruin'd if you're seen, for he has doubled his care since the last accident.

Whis. I go, I go. [Exit, L.H.]

Patch. There, go thou into my pocket. (*Puts it aside, and it falls down.*) Now I'll up the back stairs lest I meet him—Well, a dexterous chambermaid is the ladies best utensil, I say.

[Exit, L.H.]

Enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK, *with a letter in his Hand,* R.H.

Sir J. So, this is some comfort; this tells me that signior don Diego Bab.netto is safely arrived. He shall marry my daughter the

minute he comes—Ha, ha ! what's here ? (*Takes up the letter Patch dropped.*) A letter ! I don't know what to make of the superscription. I'll see what's withinside. (*Opens it.*)—Humph —'tis Hebrew, I think. What can this mean ?—There must be some trick in it. This was certainly design'd for my daughter ; but I don't know that she can speak any language but her mother tongue.—No matter for that ; this may be one of love's hieroglyphics ; and I fancy I saw Patch's tail sweep by : that wench may be a slut, and instead of guarding my honour betray it. I'll find it out, I'm resolv'd—Who's there ?

Enter SERVANT, L.H.

What answer did you bring the gentleman I sent you to invite ?

Serv. That they'd all wait on you, sir, as I told you before ; but I suppose you forgot, sir.

Sir J. Did I so, sir ? but I shan't forget to break your head if any of them come, sir.

Serv. Come, sir ! why, did not you send me to desire their company, sir ?

Sir J. But I send you now to desire their absence. Say I have something extraordinary fallen out, which calls me abroad contrary to expectation, and ask their pardon ; and, d'ye hear, send the butler to me.

Serv. Yes, sir.

[*Exit, L.H.*

Enter BUTLER, L.H.

Sir J. If this paper has a meaning I'll find it—Lay the cloth in my daughter's chamber, and bid the cook send supper thither presently.

But. Yes, sir.—Hey-day! what's the matter now? [*Exit, L.H.*

Sir J. He wants the eyes of Argus that has a young handsome daughter in this town; but my comfort is I shall not be troubled long with her. He that pretends to rule a girl once in her teens had better be at sea in a storm, and would be in less danger. [*Exit, L.H.*

SCENE II.—*Isabinda's Chamber.*

Enter ISABINDA and PATCH, L.H.

Isa. Are you sure nobody saw you speak to Whisper?

Patch. Yes, very sure, madam; but I heard sir Jealous coming down stairs, so clapped his letter into my pocket. (*Feels for the Letter.*)

Isa. A letter! give it me quickly.

Patch. Bless me! what's become on't—I'm sure I put it— (*Searching still.*)

Isa. Is it possible thou could'st be so careless?—Oh, I'm undone for ever if it be lost.

Patch. I must have dropp'd it upon the stairs. But why are you so much alarm'd? if the worst happens nobody can read it, madam, nor find out whom it was design'd for.

Isa. If it falls into my father's hands the very figure of a letter will produce ill consequences. Run and look for it upon the stairs this moment.

Patch. Nay, I'm sure it can be no where else—
(*Going.*)

Enter BUTLER, L.H.

How now, what do you want?

But. My master ordered me to lay the cloth here for supper.

Isa. Ruin'd past redemption—
(*Aside.*)

Patch. You mistake, sure. What shall we do?

Isa. I thought he expected company to-night—
Oh, poor Charles? oh, unfortunate Isabinda!
(*Aside.*)

But. I thought so too, madam; but I suppose he has altered his mind.

[*Lays the Cloth, and exit, L.H.*]

Isa. The letter is the cause. This heedless action has undone me. Fly and fasten the closet window, which will give Charles notice to retire. Ha! my father! oh, confusion!

Enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK, L.H.

Sir J. Hold, hold, Patch; whither are you going? I'll have nobody stir out of the room till after supper.

Patch. Sir, I was going to reach your easy chair—oh, wretched accident!
(*Aside.*)

Sir J. I'll have nobody stir out of the room. I don't want my easy chair.

Isa. What will be the event of this? (*Aside.*)

Sir J. Harkye, daughter, do you know this hand?

Isa. As I suspected. (*Aside.*)—Hand, do you call it, sir? 'tis some schoolboy's scrawl.

Patch. Oh, invention! thou chambermaid's best friend, assist me! (*Aside.*)

Sir J. Are you sure you don't understand it?

(*Patch feels in her Bosom, and shakes her Coats.*)

Isa. Do you understand it, sir?

Sir J. I wish I did.

Isa. Thank heav'n you do not (*Aside.*) Then I know no more of it than you do, indeed, sir!

Patch. O lord, O, lord! what have you done, sir? why, the paper is mine; I dropp'd it out of my bosom. (*Snatching it from him.*)

Sir J. Ha! yours, mistress?

Patch. Yes, sir, it is.

Sir J. What is it? speak.

Patch. Yes, sir, it is a charm for the tooth-ache—I have worn it these seven years; 'twas given me by an angel for aught I know, when I was raving with the pain, for nobody knew from whence he came nor whither he went. He charged me never to open it, lest some dire vengeance befall me, and heaven knows what will be the event. Oh, cruel misfortune! that I should drop it and you should open it—

Sir J. Plague of your charms and whims for me! if that be all 'tis well enough: there, there, burn it, and I warrant you no vengeance will follow.

Patch. So all's right again thus far. (*Aside.*)

Isa. I would not lose Patch for the world—I'll take courage a little. (*Aside.*) Is this usage for your daughter, sir? must my virtue and conduct be suspected for every trifle? You immure me like some dire offender here, and deny me all the recreations which my sex enjoy, and the custom of the country and modesty allow; yet not content with that, you make my confinement more intolerable by your mistrusts and jealousies. Would I were dead, so I were free from this.

Sir J. To-morrow rids you of this tiresome load: don Diego Babinetto will be here, and then my care ends and his begins.

Isa. Is he come then?—Oh, how shall I avoid this hated marriage! (*Aside.*)

Enter SERVANTS, with Supper, L.H.

Sir J. Come, will you sit down?

Isa. I can't eat, sir.

Patch. No, I dare swear he has given her supper enough. I wish I could get into the closet. (*Aside.*)

Sir J. Well, if you can't eat, then give me a song, whilst I do

Isa. I have such a cold I can scarce speak, sir, much less sing.—How shall I prevent Charles's coming in? (*Aside.*)

Sir J. I hope you have the use of your fingers madam. Play a tune upon your spinnet whilst your woman sings me a song.

Patch. I'm as much out of tune as my lady, if he knew all. (*Aside.*)

Isa. I shall make excellent music.

(*Sits down to play.*)

Patch. Really, sir, I am so frightened about your opening this charm that I can't remember one thing.

Sir J. Pish! hang your charm! come, come, sing any thing.

Patch. Yes, I'm likely to sing, truly. (*Aside.*) Humph, humph; bless me! I can't raise my voice, my heart pants so.

Sir J. Why, what does your heart pant so that you can't play neither? Pray what key are you in, ha!

Patch. Ah, would the key was turned on you once. (*Aside.*)

Sir J. Why don't you sing, I say?

Patch. When madam has put her spinnet in tune, sir: humph, humph—

Isa. I cannot play, sir, whatever ails me.

(*Rising.*)

Sir J. Zounds! sit down and play me a tune, or I'll break the spinnet about your ears.

Isa. What will become of me?

(*Sits down and plays.*)

Sir J. Come mistress.

(*To Patch.*)

Patch. Yes, sir. (*Sings, but horridly out of tune.*)

Sir J. Hey, hey! why, you are a-top of the house, and you are down in the cellar. What is the meaning of this? is it on purpose to cross me, ha?

Patch. Pray, madam, take it a little lower; I cannot reach that note—nor any note, I fear.

Isa. Well, begin—Oh, Patch, we shall be discovered. (*Aside.*)

Patch. I sink with apprehension, madam. (*Aside*)
Humph, humph. (*Sings.—Charles opens the Closet door, L.H.*)

Charles. Music and singing ! Death ! her father there ! (*The Women shriek.*) 'Then I must fly—
[*Exit into the Closet, R.H. Sir Jealous rises up hastily, seeing Charles slip back into the Closet.*)]

Sir J. Hell and furies ! a man in the closet.—

Patch. Ah ! a ghost ! a ghost !—He must not enter the closet. (*Isabinda throws herself down before the Closet-door as in a swoon.*)

Sir J. The devil ! I'll make a ghost of him, I warrant you. (*Strives to get by.*)

Patch. Oh, hold, sir, have a care ; you'll tread upon my lady—Who waits there ? bring some water. Oh, this comes of your opening the charm. Oh, oh, oh, oh ! (*Weeps aloud*)

Sir J. I'll charm you, housewife. Here lies the charm that conjur'd this fellow in, I'm sure on't. Come out, you rascal, do so, Zounds ! take her from the door or I'll spurn her from it, and break your neck down stairs. Where are you, sirrah ? Villain ! robber of my honour ! I'll pull you out of your nest. (*Goes into the Closet.*)

Patch. You'll be mistaken, old gentleman ; the bird is flown.

Isa. I'm glad I have 'scap'd so well ; I was almost dead in earnest with the fright.

Re-enter SIR JEALOUS out of the Closet, R.H.

Sir J. Whoever the dog were he has escap'd out of the window, for the sash is up : but though

he is got out of my reach you are not. And first, Mrs. Pander, with your charms for the tooth-ache, get out of my house, go, troop; yet hold, stay, I'll see you out of doors myself; but I'll secure your charge ere I go.

Isa. What do you mean, sir? was she not a creature of your own providing?

Sir J. She was of the devil's providing, for aught I know.

Patch. What have I done, sir, to merit your displeasure?

Sir J. I don't know which of you have done it, but you shall both suffer for it, till I can discover whose guilt it is. Go, get in there; I'll move you from this side of the house. (*Pushes Isabinda in at the Door and locks it, puts the key in his Pocket.*) I'll keep the key myself; I'll try what ghost will get into that room: and now forsooth I'll wait on you down stairs.

Patch. Ay, my poor lady!—Down stairs, sir! but I won't go out, sir, till I have lock'd up my clothes, and that's flat.

Sir J. If thou wert as naked as thou wert born, thou shouldst not stay to put on a rag and that's flat. [Exeunt, L.H.D.]

SCENE III.—*The Street.*

Sir J. (*Putting Patch out of the Door.*) There, go and come no more within sight of my habitation these three days, I charge you.

(*Slaps the Door after her.*)

Patch. Did ever any body see such an old monster!

Enter CHARLES, R.H.U.E.

Oh, Mr. Charles! your affairs and mine are in an ill posture.

Charles. I am inur'd to the frowns of fortune; but what has befall'n thee?

Patch. Sir Jealous, whose suspicious nature is always on the watch, nay, even while one eye sleeps the other keeps sentinel, upon sight of you flew into such a violent passion, that I could find no stratagem to appease him, but in spite of all arguments he lock'd his daughter into his own apartment, and turn'd me out of doors.

Charles. Ha! oh, Isabinda!

Patch. And swears she shall see neither sun nor moon till she is don Diego Babinetto's wife, who arrived last night, and is expected with impatience.

Charles. He dies; yes, by all the wrongs of love he shall: here will I plant myself, and through my breast he shall make his passage, if he enters.

Patch. A most heroic resolution! there might be ways found out more to your advantage: policy is often prefer'd to open force.

Charles. I apprehend you not.

Patch. What think you of personating this Spaniard, imposing upon the father, and marrying your mistress by his own consent?

Charles. Say'st thou so, my angel! Oh, could that be done, my life to come would be too short to recompense thee: but how can I do that when I neither know what ship he came in, nor

from what part of Spain ; who recommends him, or how attended.

Patch. I can solve all this. He is from Madrid, his father's name don Pedro Questo Portento Babinetto. Here's a letter of his to sir Jealous, which he dropp'd one day. You understand Spanish, and the hand may be counterfeit-ed. You conceive me sir ?

Charles. My better genius ! thou hast reviv'd my drooping soul. I'll about it instantly. Come to my lodgings, and we'll concert matters.

[*Exeunt, L.H.*]

SCENE IV.—*A Garden-gate open ; Scentwell waiting within.*

Enter SIR GEORGE AIRY, L.H.U.E.

Sir G. So, this is the gate, and most invitingly open. If there should be a blunderbuss here now, what a dreadful ditty would my fall make for fools, and what a jest for the wits ; how my name would be roar'd about the streets ! Well, I'll venture all.

Scent. Hist, hist ! sir George Airy (*Comes forward.*)

Sir G. A female voice ! thus far I'm safe—My dear.

Scent. No, I'm not your dear, but I'll conduct you to her. Give me your hand ; you must go through many a dark passage and dirty step before you arrive—

Sir G. I know I must before I arrive at Paradise ; therefore be quick, my charming guide.

Scent. For aught you know. Come, come, your hand, and away.

Sir G. Here, here, child; you can't be half so swift as my desires.

[*Exeunt Through the Gate, R.H.*]

SCENE V.—*The House.*

Enter MIRANDA.

Mir. Well, let me reason a little with my mad self. Now, don't I transgress all rules to venture upon a man without the advice of the grave and wise! But then a rigid, knavish guardian who would have marry'd me—to whom? even to his nauseous self, or nobody. Sir George, is what I have try'd in conversation, inquir'd into his character, and am satisfied in both. Then his love! who would have given a hundred pounds only to have seen a woman he had not infinitely lov'd? So I find my liking him has furnish'd me with arguments enough of his side: and now the only doubt remains whether he will come or no.

Enter SCENTWELL and SIR GEORGE AIRY, L.H.

Scent. That's resolv'd, madam, for here's the knight. [Exit, L.H.]

Sir G. And do I once more behold that lovely object whose idea fills my mind, and forms my pleasing dreams?

Mir. What, beginning again in heroics?—Sir George, don't you remember how little fruit

your last prodigal oration produc'd? Not one bare, single word in answer.

Sir G. Ha! the voice of my incognita! Why did you take ten thousand ways to captivate a heart your eyes alone had vanquish'd?

Mir. No more of these flights. Do you think we can agree on that same terrible bugbear, matrimony, without heartily repenting on both sides?

Sir G. It has been my wish since first my longing eyes beheld you.

Mir. And your happy ears drank in the pleasing news I had thirty thousand pounds.

Sir G. Unkind! Did I not offer you, in those purchas'd minutes, to run the risk of your fortune, so you would but secure that lovely person to my arms?

Mir. Well, if you have such love and tenderness, since our wooing has been short, pray reserve it for our future days, to let the world see we are lovers after wedlock; 'twill be a novelty.

Sir G. Haste then, and let us tie the knot, and prove the envied pair—

Mir. Hold, not so fast; I have provided better than to venture on dangerous experiments headlong—My guardian, trusting to my dissembled love, has given up my fortune to my own disposal, but with this proviso, that he to-morrow morning weds me. He is now gone to Doctor's Commons for a licence.

Sir G. Ha! a licence!

Mir. But I have planted emissaries that infallibly take him down to Epsom, under a pre-

tence that a brother usurer of his is to make him his executor, the thing on earth he covets.

Sir G. 'Tis his known character.

Mir. Now my instruments confirm him this man is dying, and he sends me word he goes this minute. It must be to-morrow ere he can be undeceiv'd: that time is ours.

Sir G. Let us improve it then, and settle on our coming years, endless happiness.

Mir. I dare not stir till I hear he's on the road—then I and my writings, the most material point, are soon remov'd.

Sir G. I have one favour to ask; if it lies in your power you would be a friend to poor Charles; though the son of this tenacious man, he is as free from all his vices as nature and a good education can make him; and, what now I have vanity enough to hope will induce you, he is the man on earth I love.

Mir. I never was his enemy, and only put it on as it help'd my designs on his father. If his uncle's estate ought to be in his possession, which I shrewdly suspect, I may do him a singular piece of service.

Sir G. You are all goodness.

Enter SCENTWELL, L.H.

Scent. Oh, madam! my master and Mr. Marplot are just coming into the house.

Mir. Undone, undone? if he finds you here in this crisis all my plots are unravell'd.

Sir G. What shall I do ? Can't I get back into the garden ?

Scent. Oh no ! he comes up those stairs.

Mir. Here, here, here ! Can you condescend to stand behind this chimney-board, sir George ?

Sir G. Any where, any where, dear madam ! without ceremony.

Scent. Come, come, sir, lie close.

(They put him behind the Chimney-board.)

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE and MARPLOT, L.H.

SIR FRANCIS peeling an Orange.

Sir F. I could not go, though 'tis upon life and death, without taking leave of dear Chargy. Besides, this fellow buzz'd in my ears that thou might'st be so desperate, as to shoot that wild rake that haunts the garden-gate, and that would bring us into trouble, dear—

Mir. So Marplot brought you back then ?

Mar. Yes, I brought him back.

Mir. I'm oblig'd to him for that, I'm sure.

(Frowning at Marplot aside.)

Mar. By her looks she means she's not oblig'd to me. I have done some mischief now, but what I can't imagine. *(Aside.)*

Sir F. Well, Chargy, I have had three messengers to come to Epsom to my neighbour Squeezum's, who, for all his vast riches, is departing. *(Sighs.)*

Mar. Ay, see what all you usurers must come to.

Sir F. Peace, you young knave ! Some forty years hence I may think on't—But, Chargy, I'll

be with thee to-morrow before those pretty eyes are open ; I will, I will, Chargy, I'll rouse you, i'faith.—Here Mrs. Scentwell, lift up your lady's chimney-board, that I may throw my peel in, and not litter her chamber.

Mir. Oh, my stars ! what will become of us now ? *(Aside.)*

Scent. Oh, pray sir give it me ; I love it above all things in nature, indeed I do.

Sir F. No, no, hussy ; you have the green pip already ; I'll have no apothecary's bills.

(Goes towards the Chimney.)

Mir. Hold, hold, hold, dear Gardy ! I have a, a, a, a monkey shut up there ; and if you open it before the man comes that is to tame it, 'tis so wild 'twill break all my china or get away, and that would break my heart ; for I'm fond on't to distraction, next thee, dear Gardy ?

(In a flattering Tone.)

Sir F. Well, well, Chargy, I won't open it ; she shall have her monkey, poor rogue ! Here, throw this peel out of the window.

[Exit Scentwell, L.H.]

Mar. A monkey ! Dear madam let me see it ; I can tame a monkey as well as the best of them all. Oh, how I love the little miniatures of man !

Mir. Be quiet, mischief ; and stand further from the chimney—You shall not see my monkey—who sure— *(Striving with him.)*

Mar. For heaven's sake, dear madam ! let me but peep to see if it be as pretty as lady Fiddle-faddle's. Has it got a chain ?

Mir. Not yet, but I design it one shall last its

lifetime. Nay, you shall not see it—Look, Gardy, how he teazes me!

Sir F. (*Getting between him and the Chimney.*) Sirrah, sirrah, let my Chargy's monkey alone, or bamboo shall fly about your ears. What, is there no dealing with you?

Mar. Pugh, plague of the monkey! here's a rout! I wish he may rival you.

Enter SERVANT, L.H.

Serv. Sir, they have put two more horses to the coach as you order'd, and 'tis ready at the door.

Sir F. Well, I am going to be executor; better for thee, jewel. B'ye, Chargy; one buss!—I'm glad thou hast got a monkey to divert thee a little.

Mir. Thank'ye, dear Gardy!—Nay, I'll see you to the coach.

Sir F. That's kind, adad.

Mir. Come along, impertinence. (*To Marplot.*)

Mar. (*Stepping back.*) 'Egad I will see the monkey now. (*Lifts up the board and discovers Sir George.*) O Lord! O lord! Thieves! thieves! murder!

Sir G. Damn ye, you unlucky dog! 'tis I. Which way shall I get out? Show me instantly, or I'll cut your throat.

Mar. Undone, undone! At that door there. But hold, hold; break that china, and I'll bring you off.

(*He runs off at the Corner and throws down some China.*)

Re-enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE, MIRANDA, and
SCENTWELL, L.H.

Sir F. Mercy on me ! what's the matter ?

Mir. O, you toad ! what have you done ?

Mar. No great harm ; I beg of you to forgive me. Longing to see this monkey, I did but just raise up the board, and it flew over my shoulders, scratch'd all my face broke your china, and whisked out of the window.

Sir F. Where, where is it, sirrah ?

Mar. There, there, sir Francis, upon your neighbour Parmazan's pantiles.

Sir F. Was ever such an unlucky rogue ! Sirrah, I forbid you my house. Call the servants to get the monkey again. Pug, pug, pug ! I would stay myself to look for it, but you know my earnest business.

Scent. Oh, my lady will be best to lure it back ; all them creatures love my lady extremely.

Mir. Go, go, dear Gardy ! I hope I shall recover it.

Sir F. B'ye, b'ye dearee ! Ah, mischief ! how you look now ! B'ye, b'ye. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Mir. Scentwell, see him in the coach, and bring me word.

Scent. Yes, madam. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Mir. So, sir you have done your friend a signal piece of service, I suppose.

Mar. Why, look you, madam, if I have committed a fault, thank yourself ; no man is more serviceable when I am let into a secret, and

none more unlucky at finding it out. Who could divine your meaning; when you talk'd of a blunderbuss, who thought of a rendezvous? and when you talked of a monkey, who the devil dreamt of sir George?

Mir. A sign you converse but little with our sex, when you can't reconcile contradictions.

Re-enter SCENTWELL, L.H.

Scent. He's gone, madam, as fast as the coach and six can carry him—

Re-enter SIR GEORGE AIRY, R.H.U.E.

Sir G. Then I may appear.

Mar. Here's pug, ma'am—Dear sir George make my peace, on my soul I never took you for a monkey before.

Sir G. I dare swear thou didst not. Madam, I beg you to forgive him.

Mir. Well, sir George, if he can be secret.

Mar. 'Odsheart, madam! I'm secret as a priest when trusted.

Sir G. Why 'tis with a priest our business is at present.

Scent. Madam, here's Mrs. Isabinda's woman to wait on you.

Mir. Bring her up.

Enter PATCH, L.H.

How do ye, Mrs. Patch? What news from your lady?

Patch. That's for your private ear, madam. Sir George, there's a friend of yours has an urgent occasion for your assistance.

Sir G. His name.

Patch. Charles.

Mar. Ha! then there's something a-foot that I know nothing of. (*Aside.*) I'll wait on you, sir George.

Sir G. A third person may not be proper, perhaps. As soon as I have dispatched my own affairs I am at his service. I'll send my servant to tell him I'll wait on him in half an hour.

Mir. How came you employed in this message, Mrs. Patch?

Patch. Want of business, madam; I am discharg'd by my master, but hope to serve my lady still

Mir. How! discharg'd! you must tell me the whole story within.

Patch. With all my heart, madam.

Mar. Tell it here, Mrs. Patch.—Pish! plague; I wish I were fairly out of the house. I find marriage is the end of this secret; and now I'm half mad to know what Charles wants him for.

(*Aside.*)

Sir G. Madam, I'm doubly press'd by love and friendship. This exigence admits of no delay. Shall we make Marplot of the party?

Mir. If you'll run the hazard, sir George; I believe he means well.

Mar. Nay, nay, for my part I desire to be let into nothing; I'll be gone, therefore pray don't mistrust me.

(*Going.*)

Sir G. So now he has a mind to be gone to Charles: but not knowing what affairs he may have upon his hands at present, I'm resolv'd he shan't stir. (*Aside.*) No, Mr. Marplot, you must not leave us; we want a third person.

(*Takes hold of him.*)

Mar. I never had more mind to be gone in my life.

Mir. Come along then; if we fail in the voyage, thank yourself for taking this ill-starr'd gentleman on board.

Sir G. That vessel ne'er can unsuccessful prove, [love.

Whose freight is beauty, and whose pilot's
[*Exeunt Sir George and Miranda, L.H.*

Mar. Tyty ti, tyty ti.

(*Steals off the other Way.*)

Re-enter SIR GEORGE, L.H.

Sir G. Marplot! Marplot!

Mar. (*Entering.*) Here! I was coming, sir
George. [*Exeunt, L.H.*

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Room in Sir Francis Gripe's House.*

Enter MIRANDA, PATCH, and SCENTWELL, R. H.

Mir. Well, Patch, I have done a strange bold thing; my fate is determined, and expectation is no more. Now to avoid the impertinence and roguery of an old man, I have thrown myself into the extravagance of a young one; if he should despise, slight, or use me ill, there's no remedy from a husband but the grave, and that's a terrible sanctuary to one of my age and constitution.

Patch. Oh! fear not, madam; you'll find your account in sir George Airy; it is impossible a man of sense should use a woman ill, endowed with beauty, wit, and fortune. It must be the lady's fault if she does not wear the unfashionable name of wife easy, when nothing but complaisance and good humour is requisite on either side to make them happy.

Mir. I long till I am out of this house, lest any accident should bring my guardian back. Scentwell, put my best jewels into the little casket, slip them into thy pocket, and let us march off to sir Jealous.

Scent. It shall be done, madam. [*Exit, R.H.*]

Patch. Sir George will be impatient, madam. If their plot succeeds, we shall be well receiv'd;

if not, he will be able to protect us. Besides, I long to know how my young lady fares.

Mir. Farewell, old Mammon, and thy detested walls ! 'I will be no more sweet sir Francis ! I shall be compell'd to the odious task of dissembling no longer to get my own, and coax him with the wheedling names of my precious, my dear, dear Gardy ! O heavens !

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE, *behind*, R.H.

Sir F. Ah, my sweet Chargy ! don't be frightened ; (*She starts.*) but thy poor Gardy has been abus'd, cheated, fool'd, betray'd ; but nobody knows by whom.

Mir. Undone, past redemption. (*Aside.*)

Sir F. What won't you speak to me, Chargy ?

Mir. I am so surpris'd with joy to see you I know not what to say.

Sir F. Poor, dear girl ! But do you know that my son, or some such rogue, to rob or murder me, or both, contriv'd this journey ? for upon the road I met my neighbour Squeezum well, and coming to town.

Mir. Good lack ! good lack ! what tricks are there in this world !

Re-enter SCENTWELL, R.H. *with a diamond Necklace in her Hand, not seeing sir Francis.*

Scent. Madam, be pleas'd to tie this necklace on, for I can't get into the—(*Seeing sir Francis.*)

Mir. The wench is a fool, I think ! Could

you not have carried it to be mended without putting it in the box.

Sir F. What's the matter?

Mir. Only, dearee! I bid her—I bid her—Your ill-usage has put every thing out of my head. But won't you go, Gardy, and find out these fellows, and have them punished, and, and—

Sir F. Where should I look for them, child? no, I'll set me down contented with my safety, nor stir out of my own doors till I go with thee to a parson.

Mir. If he goes into his closet I am ruin'd. (*Aside.*) Oh, bless me! In this fright I had forgot Mrs. Patch.

Patch. Ay, madam, and I stay for your speedy answer.

Mir. I must get him out of the house. Now assist me, fortune! (*Aside.*)

Sir F. Mrs. Patch! I profess I did not see you: how dost thou do, Mrs. Patch? Well, don't you repent leaving my Chargy?

Patch. Yes, every body must love her—but I come now—Madam, what did I come for? my invention is at the last ebb. (*Aside to Miranda.*)

Sir F. Nay, never whisper, tell me.

Mir. She came, dear Gardy! to invite me to her lady's wedding, and you shall go with me, Gardy; 'tis to be done this moment, to a Spanish merchant. Old sir Jealous keeps on his humour: the first minute he sees her, the next he marries her.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! ha! I'd go if I thought the sight of matrimony would tempt Chargy to

perform her promise. There was a smile, there was a consenting look, with those pretty twinklers, worth a million! 'Ods precious! I am happier than the great mogul, the emperor of China, or all the potentates that are not in the wars. Speak, confirm it, make me leap out of my skin.

Mir. When one has resolved, 'tis in vain to stand shilly shally. If ever I marry, positively this is my wedding-day.

Sir F. Oh! happy, happy man—Verily, I will heget a son the first night shall disinherit that dog Charles. I have estate enough to purchase a barony, and be the immortalizing the whole family of the Gripes.

Mir. Come then, Gardy, give me thy hand; let's to this house of Hymen.

My choice is fix'd, let good or ill betide;

Sir F. The joyful bridegroom I,

Mir. And I the happy bride. [Exeunt, L.H.]

SCENE II. *An Apartment in the House of sir Jealous Traffick.*

Enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK R.H. meeting a Servant.

Serv. Sir, here's a couple of gentlemen inquire for you; one of them calls himself signior Diego Babinetto.

Sir J. Ha! Signior Babinetto! admit 'em instantly—joyful minute; I'll have my daughter married to-night.

Enter CHARLES, L.H. in a Spanish habit, with SIR GEORGE AIRY, dressed like a Merchant.

Senhor, beso las manos : vuestra merced es muy bien venido en esta tierra.

Charles. Senhor, soy muy humilde, y muy obligado cryado de vuestra merced : mi padre embia a vuestra merced, los mas profundos de sus respetos ; y a comissionado este mercad del Ingles, de concluyr un negocio, que me haze el mas dichos shombre del mundo, haziendo me su yerno.

Sir J. I am glad on't, for I find I have lost much of my Spanish. Sir, I am your most humble servant. Signior don Diego Babinetto has informed me that you are commissioned by Signior don Pedro, &c. his worthy father—

Sir G. To see an affair of marriage consummated between a daughter of yours and signior Diego Babinetto his son here. True, sir, such a trust is repos'd in me, as that letter will inform you.—I hope 'twill pass upon him.

(Aside.)—(Gives him a Letter.)

Sir J. Ay, 'tis his hand. *(Seems to read.)*

Sir G. Good, you have counterfeited to a nicety, Charles. *(Aside to Charles.)*

Sir J. Sir, I find by this that you are a man of honour and probity ; I think, sir, he calls you Meanwell.

Sir G. Meanwell is my name, sir.

Sir J. A very good name, and very significant. For to mean well is to be honest, and to

be honest is the virtue of a friend, and a friend is the delight and support of human society.

Sir G. You shall find that I'll discharge the part of a friend in what I have undertaken, sir Jealous. Therefore, sir, I must entreat the presence of your fair daughter, and the assistance of your chaplain; for signior don Pedro strictly enjoined me to see the marriage rites performed as soon as we should arrive, to avoid the accidental overtures of Venus.

Sir J. Overtures of Venus!

Sir G. Ay, sir; that is, those little hawking females that traverse the park and the play-house to put off their damag'd ware—they fasten upon foreigners like leeches, and watch their arrival as carefully as the Kentish men do a shipwreck: I warrant you they have heard of him already.

Sir J. Nay, I know this town swarms with them.

Sir G. Ay, and then you know the Spaniards are naturally amorous, but very constant; the first face fixes 'em; and it may be very dangerous to let him ramble ere he is tied.

Sir J. Pat to my purpose—Well, sir, there is but one thing more, and they shall be married instantly.

Charles. Pray heaven that one thing more won't spoil all. (*Aside.*)

Sir J. Don Pedro wrote me word, in his last but one, that he designed the sum of five thousand crowns by way of jointure for my daughter, and that it should be paid into my hand upon the day of marriage—

Charles. Oh, the devil! (*Aside.*)

Sir J. In order to lodge it in some of our funds in case she should become a widow, and return to England—

Sir G. Plague on't! this is an unlucky turn. What shall I say? (*Aside.*)

Sir J. And he does not mention one word of it in this letter.

Sir G. Humph! True, sir Jealous, he told me such a thing, but, but, but, but—he, he, he, he—he did not imagine that you would insist upon the very day; for, for, for, for money, you know, is dangerous returning by sea, an, an, an—

Charles. Zounds! say we have brought it in commodities. (*Aside to sir G.*)

Sir G. And so, sir, he has sent it in merchandize tobacco, sugars, spices, lemons, and so forth, which shall be turned into money with all expedition; in the mean time, sir, if you please to accept of my bond for performance—

Sir J. It is enough, sir; I am so pleas'd with the countenance of signior Diego, and the harmony of your name, that I'll take your word, and will fetch my daughter this moment. With-in there.

Enter SERVANT L.H.

Desire Mr Tackum, my neighbour's chaplain, to walk hither.

Serv. Yes, sir. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Sir J. Gentlemen, I'll return in an instant.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

Sir G. 'Egad, that five thousand crowns had like to have ruined the plot.

Charles. But that's over; and if fortune throws no more rubs in our way—

Sir G. Thou'lt carry the prize—But hist! here he comes.

Re-enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK, dragging in ISABINDA, R.H.

Sir J. Come along, you stubborn baggage, you! come along.

Isa. Oh! hear me, sir, hear me but speak one word;

Do not destroy my everlasting peace;
My soul abhors this Spaniard you have chose.

Sir J. How's that?

Isa. Let this posture move your tender nature.
(*Kneels.*)

For ever will I hang upon these knees,
Not loose my hands till you cut off my hold,
If you refuse to hear me. sir.

Sir J. Did you ever see such a perverse slut? Off, I say. Mr. Meanwell, pray help me a little.

Sir G. Rise, madam, and do not disoblige your father, who has provided a husband worthy of you, one that will love you equal with his soul, and one that you will love, when once you know him.

Isa. Oh! never, never!
Could I suspect that falsehood in my heart,
I would this moment tear it from my breast,
And straight present him with the treach'rous part.

Sir J. Falsehood! why, who the devil are you in love with? Don't provoke me, or by St. Iago I shall beat you, housewife.

Sir G. Sir Jealous, you are too passionate. Give me leave, I'll try by gentle words to work her to your purpose.

Sir J. I pray do, Mr. Meanwell, I pray do; she'll break my heart. (*Weeps.*) There is in that casket jewels of the value of three thousand pounds, which were her mother's, and a paper wherein I have settled one-half of my estate upon her now, and the whole when I die, but provided she marries this gentleman, else by St. Iago, I'll turn her out of doors to beg or starve. Tell her this, Mr. Meanwell, pray do. (*Walks toward Charles.*)

Sir G. Ha! this is beyond expectation (*Aside.*) Trust to me, sir, I'll lay the dangerous consequence of disobeying you at this juncture before her, I warrant you. Come, madam, do not blindly cast your life away just in the moment you would wish to save it.

Isa Pray cease your trouble, sir: I have no wish but death to free me from this bated Spaniard. If you are his friend, inform him what I say.

Sir G. Suppose this Spaniard, which you strive to shun, should be the very man to whom you'd fly?

Isa. Ha!

Sir G. Would you not blame your rash resolve, and curse your eyes that would not look on Charles?

Isa. On Charles ! Where is he ? *(Rises.)*

Sir G. Hold, hold, hold, 'Sdeath ! madam, you'll ruin all. Your father believes him to be signior Babinetto. Compose yourself a little, pray madam. *(He runs to Sir Jealous.)* She begins to hear reason, sir ; the fear of being turned out of doors has done it. Speak gently to her, sir ; I'm sure she'll yield ; I see it in her face.

Sir J. Well, Isabinda, can you refuse to bless a father whose only care is to make you happy.

Isa. Oh, sir ! do with me what you please ; I am all obedience.

Sir J. And wilt thou love him ?

Isa. I will endeavour it, sir.

Enter SERVANT, L.H.

Serv. Sir, here is Mr. Tackum.

Sir J. Show him into the parlour. *[Exit Servant, L.H.]* Senhor tome vind sueipora ; este momento les junta les manos.

(Gives her to Charles.)

Charles. Senhor, yo la recibo como se deve un tesora tan grande. *(Embraces her.)*

Sir J. Now, Mr. Meanwell, let's to the parson, Who, by his art, will join this pair for life,
Make me the happiest father, her the happiest wife. *[Exeunt, R.H.]*

SCENE III.—*A Street before Sir Jealous Traffick's House.*

Enter MARPLOT, L.H.

Mar. I have hunted all over the town for Charles, but can't find him, and by Whisper's scouting at the end of the street, I suspect he must be in the house again. I am informed too that he has borrowed a Spanish habit out of the playhouse: what can it mean?

Enter a SERVANT of Sir Jealous Traffick's to him out of the House.

Harkye, sir, do you belong to this house?

Serv. Yes, sir.

Mar. Isn't your name Richard?

Serv. No, sir; Thomas.

Mar. Oh, ay, Thomas—Well, Thomas, there's a shilling for you

Serv. Thank you, sir.

Mar. Pray, Thomas, can you tell if there be a gentleman in it in a Spanish habit?

Serv. There's a Spanish gentleman within that is just a-going to marry my young lady, sir.

Mar. Are you sure he is a Spanish gentleman?

Serv. I'm sure he speaks no English that I hear of

Mar. Then that can't be him I want, for 'tis an English gentleman that I inquire after; he may be dressed like a Spaniard, for aught I know.

Serv. Ha! who knows but this may be an imposter? I'll inform my master, for if he should be impos'd upon, he'll beat us all round. (*Aside.*) Pray come in, sir, and see if this be the person you inquire for.

Mar. Ay, I'll follow you. Now for it.

[*Exeunt into the house.*]

SCENE IV.—*The inside of the house.*

Enter MARPLOT and SERVANT, L.H.

Serv. Sir, please to stay here; I'll send my master to you. [*Exit, R.H.*]

Mar. So this was a good contrivance. If this be Charles now, he will wonder how I found him out.

Re-enter SERVANT and SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK, R.H.

Sir J. What is your earnest business, block-head! that you must speak with me before the ceremony's past? Ha! who this?

Serv. Why this gentleman, sir, wants another gentleman in a Spanish habit he says.

Sir J. In a Spanish habit! 'tis some friend of signior don Diego's, I warrant. (*Aside.*) Sir, your servant.

Mar. Your servant, sir.

Sir J. I suppose you would speak with signior Babinetto.

Mar. Sir!

Sir J. I say, I suppose you would speak with signior Babinetto?

Mar. Hey-day ! what the devil does he say now ? (*Aside.*) Sir, I dont understand you.

Sir J. Don't you understand Spanish, sir ?

Mar. Not I indeed, sir.

Sir J. I thought you had known signior Babinetto.

Mar. Not I, upon my word, sir.

Sir J. What then you'd speak with his friend, the English merchant, Mr. Meanwell ?

Mar. Neither, sir, not I ; I don't mean any such thing.

Sir J. Why, who are you then, sir ? and what do you want ? (*In an angry Tone.*)

Mar. Nay nothing at all, not I, sir—Plague on him ! I wish I were out ; he begins to exalt his voice ! I shall be beaten again. (*Aside.*)

Sir J. Nothing at all, sir ! Why then what business have you in my house, ha ?

Serv. You said you wanted a gentleman in a Spanish habit.

Mar. Why, ay but his name is neither Babinetto nor Meanwell.

Sir J. What is his name then, sirrah ? Ha ! now I look at you again, I believe you are the rogue that threatened me with half a dozen myrmidons—

Mar. Me, sir ! I never saw your face in all my life before.

Sir J. Speak, sir ; who is it you look for ? or, or—

Mar. A terrible old dog ! (*Aside.*) Why, sir, only an honest young fellow of my acquaintance I thought that here might be a ball, and that

he might have been here in a masquerade.—'Tis Charles, sir Francis Gripe's son,—because I know he us'd to come hither sometimes.

Sir J. Did he so?—Not that I know of, I'm sure. Pray heaven that this be don Diego—If I should be trick'd now—Ha! my heart mis-gives me plaguily—Within there! stop the marriage—Run, sirrah, call all my servants! I'll be satisfied that this is signior Pedro's son ere he has my daughter.

Mar. Ha! sir George! what have I done now?

Enter SIR GEORGE AIRY, with a drawn sword, between the Scenes, R H.

Sir G. Ha! Marplot here—oh, the unlucky dog—What's the matter, sir Jealous?

Sir J. Nay, I don't know the matter, Mr. Meanwell.

Mar. Upon my soul, sir George—

(Going up to sir George.)

Sir J. Nay then, I'm betray'd, ruin'd, undone.—Thieves, traitors, rogues! *(Offers to go in.)* Stop the marriage, I say—

Sir G. I say go on, Mr. Tackum—Nay, no entering here; I guard this passage, old gentleman: the act and deed were both your own, and I'll see 'em sign'd, or die for't.

Enter SERVANT, L.H.

Sir J. A plague on the act and deed!—Fall on sir, knock him down.

Sir G. Ay, come on scoundrels! I'll prick your jackets for you.

Sir J. Zounds! sirrah, I'll be reveng'd on you. *(Beats Marplot.)*

Sir G. Ay, there your vengeance is due. Ha, ha!

Mar. Why, what do you beat me for? I ha'nt married your daughter.

Sir J. Rascals! why don't you knock him down?

Serv. We are afraid of his sword, sir; if you'll take that from him, we'll knock him down presently.

Enter CHARLES and ISABINDA, R.H.

Sir J. Seize her then.

Charles. Rascals, retire, she's my wife; touch her if you dare; I'll make dogs'-meat of you.

Mar. Ay, I'll make dogs'-meat of you, rascals.

Sir J. Ah! downright English—Oh, oh, oh, oh!

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE and MIRANDA, L.H.

Sir F. Into the house of joy we enter without knocking—Ha! I think 'tis the house of sorrow, sir Jealous.

Sir J. Oh, sir Francis, are you come? What! was this your contrivance, to abuse, trick, and chouse me out of my child?

Sir F. My contrivance! what do you mean?

Sir J. No, you don't know your son there in a Spanish habit?

Sir F. How! my son in a Spanish habit! Sirrah, you'll come to be hang'd. Get out of my sight, ye dog! get out of my sight.

Sir J. Get out of your sight, sir! get out with your bags. Let's see what you'll give him now to maintain my daughter on.

Sir F. Give him! he shall never be the better for a penny of mine—and you might have look'd after your daughter better, sir Jealous. Trick'd quotha! 'Egad, I think you design'd to trick me: but look ye, gentlemen, I believe I shall trick you both. This lady is my wife, do you see, and my estate shall descend only to her children.

Sir G. I shall be extremely obliged to you, sir Francis.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha, ha! poor sir George! does not your hundred pounds stick in your stomach? ha, ha, ha!

Sir G. No faith, sir Francis, this lady has given me a cordial for that.

(Takes her by the Hand.)

Sir F. Hold, sir, you have nothing to say to this lady.

Sir G. Nor you nothing to do with my wife, sir.

Sir F. Wife, sir!

Mir. Ay, really, guardian, 'tis even so. I hope you'll forgive my first offence.

Sir F. What have you chous'd me out of my consent and your writings then, mistress, ha?

Mir. Out of nothing but my own, guardian.

Sir J. Ha, ha, ha! 'tis some comfort at least to see you are over-reach'd as well as myself. Will you settle your estate upon your son now!

Sir F. He shall starve first.

Mir. That I have taken care to prevent. There, sir, are the writings of your uncle's estate, which have been your due these three years. (*Gives Charles papers.*)

Charles. I shall study to deserve this favour.

Mar. Now how the devil could she get those writings, and I know nothing of it.

Sir F. What have you robb'd me too, mistress? 'Egad, I'll make you restore 'em—hussy, I will so.

Sir J. Take care I don't make you pay the arrears, sir. 'Tis well 'tis no worse, since 'tis no better. Come young man, seeing thou hast outwitted me, take her, and bless you both!

Charles. I hope, sir, you'll bestow your blessing too; 'tis all I ask. (*Kneels.*)

Mar. Do, Gardy, do.

Sir F. Confound you all! [*Exit, L.H.*]

Mar. Mercy upon us, how he looks!

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha! ne'er mind his curses, Charles; thou'lt thrive not one jot the worse for 'em. Since this gentleman is reconcil'd we are all made happy.

Sir J. I always lov'd precaution, and took care to avoid dangers; but when a thing was past, I ever had philosophy to be easy.

Charles. Which is the true sign of a great soul. I lov'd your daughter, and she me, and you shall have no reason to repent her choice.

Isa. You will not blame me, sir, for loving my own country best.

Mar. So here's every body happy, I find, but

poor Pilgarlick. I wonder what satisfaction I shall have for being cuff'd, kick'd, and beaten in your service !

Sir J. I have been a little too familiar with you as things are fallen out ; but since there's no help for't, you must forgive me.

Mar. 'Egad I think so—but provided that you be not so familiar for the future.

Sir G. Thou hast been an unlucky rogue.

Mar. But very honest.

Charles. That I'll vouch for, and freely forgive thee.

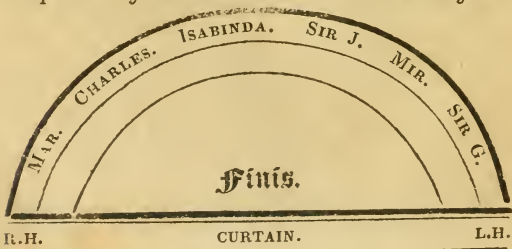
Sir G. And I'll do you one piece of service more, Marplot ; I'll take care sir Francis makes you master of your estate.

Mar. That will make me as happy as any of you.

Sir J. Now let us in, and refresh ourselves with a cheerful glass, in which we'll bury all animosities ; and

By my example let all parents move,
And never strive to cross their children's love ;
But still submit that care to Providence above.

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.



Epilogue.

IN me you see one busy body more,
Though you may have enough of one before.
With epilogues, the busy body's way,
We strive to help, but sometimes mar a play.
At this mad sessions, half-condemn'd ere try'd,
Some in three days have been turn'd off, and dy'd :
In spite of parties, their attempts are vain,
For, like false prophets, they ne'er rise again.
Too late, when cast, your favour one beseeches,
And epilogues prove execution speeches.
Yet sure I spy no busy bodies here,
And one may pass, since they do ev'ry where.
Sour critics, time, and breath, and censures waste;
And balk your pleasure to refine your taste ;
One busy don ill-tim'd high tenets preaches,
Another yearly shows himself in speeches ;
Some sniv'ling cits would have a peace for spite,
To starve those warriors who so bravely fight ;
Still of a foe upon his knees afraid,
Whose well-bang'd troops want money, heart, and bread.
Old beaux, who none, not e'en themselves, can please,
Are busy still for nothing—but to tease ;
The young, so busy to engage a heart,
The mischief done are busy most to part ;
Ungrateful wretches! who still cross one's will,
When they more kindly might be busy still :

One to a husband who ne'er dream'd of horns,
Shows how dear spouse with friend his brows adorns ;
Th' officious tell-tale fool (he should repent it.)
Parts three kind souls that liv'd at peace contented.
Some with law quirks set houses by the ears ;
With physic one what he would heal impairs ;
Like that dark, mop'd up fry, that neighb'ring curse,
Who to remove love's pains bestow a worse.
Since then this meddling tribe infest the age,
Bear one awhile expos'd upon the stage ;
Let none but busy bodies vent their spite,
And, with good-humour, pleasure crown the night.

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